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A GIRL REPORTER.

The Mystery of a Strange Mental Gift --- The Curious Case Against Hathaway--- On a Robber's Trail.

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Author of "The Melville Murder," "Something Wrong at the Bank," Etc.

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CHAPTER I.

BREAKING IN A NEW REPORTER.

Harry Ellis, criminal reporter for the Morning Record, closed the door of the city editor's room with the slightest suspicion of a slam and passed down the corridor leading to the elevator shaft with a frown on his usually good-natured face.

In the presence of his superior he had been careful to conceal his disappointment and chagrin, for the city editor was hardly a man to be trifled with in the management of his department, and, then, there were many members of the staff of the Morning Record who sought the position of criminal reporter.

So Ellis kept his temper in order that he might keep his place, venting his anger in words only, when he encountered his chum, the special detail man, at the entrance to the big newspaper building.

Pixley seemed to be waiting for him, for he glanced up with a smile as Ellis stepped out of the elevator cage.

"How is it, old man?" Pixley asked, as the reporter took his arm and turned down the steps. "All right?"

"It's a beastly shame," said Ellis, turning his face away that he might not witness his friend's disappointment, "but it isn't all right, and I've got to break in a new hand."

"A new hand," echoed Pixley. "Who is the new hand?"

Pixley was angry, for he had counted much on the reputation he was to achieve in the Central bank robbery case.

"I don't know," was the dejected reply, "except that it is a woman. I think the city editor's wheels must be getting the start of him. How am I to work a bank robbery case with a woman trailing along after me? I'd cut my job if I had any prospects of getting another."

"It beats me," said Pixley, "but it may come out all right. I wish you all the luck in the world, anyway. If I can help you just shout."

Pixley turned back into the newspaper building to receive his assignment for the day and Ellis, after glancing at the address on a card in his hand, took a car for a near-by suburb.

After half an hour's ride he alighted in a distinctively residence locality and was soon ringing the bell at the front door of a neat cottage standing back from the street in a tiny grove of trees. In the summer the place was undoubtedly attractive, but now, with the trees bare of leaves and great banks of snow piled up on either side of the walk leading to the gate, it looked lonely and deserted.

As Ellis waited on the diminutive porch for an answer to his ring a girl's face showed itself for an instant at one of the front windows and then disappeared from view.

It was a handsome, oval face, with soft, brown eyes, a perfect complexion, a tender, sensitive mouth, and a refined forehead, rather full just above the temples and remarkably so at the parting of the hair, which was nut-brown and glossy and had in pretty ripples about the peachy cheeks and throat.

Ellis scanned the face with a quick flutter of admiration at his heart. He thought then, and for many years afterward, that it was the fairest face his eyes had ever rested upon.

"The sight of such a face is worth something," he thought, "and if I am to visit here frequently, I hope the owner of it will show herself occasionally."

Presently the door was opened to the limit of a chain which held it on the inside, and the faded face of a woman of middle age looked out. Ellis presented his card and stood waiting for permission to enter.

He could hear whispering voices in the little vestibule, but could not distinguish the words used. In a moment the door-chain fell against the casing with a clatter, and the door itself was thrown open.

The woman who received him was the same who had for an instant peered out of the narrow opening before the chain fell. She was dressed in a long robe of good material which had once been of a brilliant purple, but which was now sadly faded and worn. Her ears and fingers were decorated with heavy jewelry of a yellowish cast, and a yellow girdle encircled her waist. The bones of her face were prominent, particularly the cheek bones, and the spaces under her eyes were sunken and discolored. Her complexion was of a ghastly white, save where the skin bore the marks of cosmetics, used long ago to heighten the appearance of what must then have been a spirited and attractive face. Its figure she was tall and stately and her eyes and hair were dead black, the latter being thrown straight back from the forehead and hanging in a midnight mass about her neck and shoulders.

"Resembles a retired actress or a teller of fortunes," thought the reporter. "I wonder if it is she that I am to work with? The good Lord forbid!"

"We have been expecting you," she said, in a musical voice. "Kindly step into the parlor."

In the courtesy of her manner, in the grace of her movements, in the low music of her voice, Ellis soon forgot the marks of time upon the face of the woman.

"I have heard much of you," she said, motioning the reporter to a chair and seating herself on a couch which stood at the back of the room, away from the strong light of the window, "and have followed your work on the Morning Record carefully, so you may well imagine that I am not a little acquainted with you."

"You are very kind," was the guarded reply. "It is not every reader of the daily papers who can distinguish the individual in the mere writer of the daily news, or who cares to do so. You understand why I am here, I presume," he added. "Have you read all that has come to light regarding the case we are to handle?"

The woman gave vent to a low, musical laugh, which might well have emanated from the lips of a carefree girl of sixteen.

"There is a delicious flavor of flattery in your mistake," she said, "but the truth must be told. It is my daughter who is to try her skill in the newspaper field. She will be here presently."

At that moment the heavy portieres which draped the back of the parlor were thrust aside by a shapely hand, and the young girl whose face Ellis had seen at the window stepped into the room.

The woman arose and led the girl to the spot where Ellis stood; one hand thrust awkwardly into the pocket of his overcoat, his eyes fastened admiringly upon the

The dusky man handed the other a small package.

blushing face before him.

"Mr. Ellis, my daughter, Miss Edith Richards," she said.

The reporter heard but faintly the words of the formal presentation—for they seemed to come from an infinite distance through space. Afterwards he remembered a sensation very like an electric shock as he took the girl's extended hand and held it for an instant.

If the girl's face when seen for an instant at the window had seemed fair to the reporter, it appeared doubly so now, when viewed in connection with the slender, graceful figure, and with all the glow and delicate shading of youthful coloring upon it. She was dressed in a handsome afternoon costume of blue, the waist and skirt being of the same material, and the only ornament about her person, save the delicate flowers in her hair, was a tiny diamond pin which flashed and sparkled at her throat.

For a moment Ellis' amazement dented his lips the power of speech. How was this delicately pretty girl of seventeen, this innocent creature who seemed to the enamored man who sat devouring her dainty beauty with his eyes, to inhabit the earth only to be loved, and made much of, and cherished; how was this sweet and tender child to aid him in the Morning Record's quest of a bank robber?

The mother was quick to observe the accident looks with which the visitor was regarding her daughter, and turned away with a smile.

"You have much to talk about," she said, "and I will leave you alone together for a time."

"Now kindly tell me what progress has been made in the bank case," were the words which finally brought the reporter back to the things of the present. They were spoken in low, musical tones similar to those of the mother, only slower and softer, and with a lingering sweetness in every note.

"Why," replied Ellis, ashamed [illegible]

"Yes; every employe of the bank is suspected, of course."

"And the Morning Record is trying to outdo the police in bringing the guilty person to justice? Is that it?"

"That is it, exactly, and you and I are to do the work of the paper. Are you familiar with such undertakings?"

Edith blushed, but did not turn her eyes from the reporter's face.

"No," she said, simply. "This is my first attempt at newspaper work. Isn't it remarkable that my first case should be one of such grave importance?"

"Do you know our city editor?" asked Ellis. "If you do, you will not be surprised at any assignments he may make."

"I do not know him personally," was the reply. "Something I wrote not long ago pleased him, I believe, and that is the result."

"I shall do all within my power to make the place pleasant for you," said Ellis, gallantly. "but I'm afraid you won't like it at first. You're liable to get a rough and difficult assignment any day, you know."

"I can only do my very best," was the hopeful reply, and then they fell to discussing the bank case, and how best to make a great sensation from it in the issue of the following day. They sat there a long time with their heads close together like two lovers—and then Ellis arose to go.

"Then," summarized the girl, following him into the little reception hall, "I am to be at the office with my report at eight o'clock, and am to write my article in my own way?"

"Exactly," was the reply, "and perhaps you'd better go to the bank the first thing. You may pick up some gossip there."

Edith bowed and Ellis went off down the street with a happy heart. He even found himself counting the hours which must elapse before he should see her face and hear her voice again.

These proved to be nothing new about the case. The evening papers, which had carried the story of the robbery far and wide, had exhausted the affair and the bank was closed. He was conscious of having passed the time in a lingering at the Roberts' home, and did the best he could to make up for the time he had thus been lost so deliciously, but it was a meager bit of work that he had to show after dinner.

At eight o'clock Edith came into the room where he was at work alone and shyly greeted herself by his side. The keen air of the street and the excitement of the day had heightened her beauty, and there was a faint perfume about her that somehow possessed a part of herself.

Ellis put through her notes leisurely, for in her anxiety she had drawn her chair so close to his own that her face hovered in against his, and it was a pleasant to feel the contact and to breath the sweet warmth of her. A delicious perfume which seemed to surround her like an atmosphere of purity.

"I telephoned to the bank, which was closed for the day," she said, when he looked on, and they let me in. I saw everything it desired to, and," laughing, "came away with an idea. I will give you an idea regarding an event to stand on the spot where it took place," she added, gravely.

"Sometimes it gives me a wrong idea," said Ellis with a smile, "but I almost always get something out of it. Now, you know all that is necessary for you to write in your way, with no reference whatever to my own."

Edith wrote away for an hour and then laid a little heap of manuscript on Ellis' desk.

"I hope it will answer," she said.

"I am sure it will," was the reply, "and now." Ellis added, "you may as well go home for the night. You must be tired."

"You are making it easy for me," said the girl, gratefully, "and I shall try hard to please you."

When the reporter was alone he took up the manuscript. Edith had left and began to read it, expecting little in the way of new ideas from the girl, as the first paragraph created his attention.

CHAPTER II.

A REMARKABLE MANUSCRIPT.

"It is now believed," began the article, "that the package of diamonds which was stolen from the Central bank on Monday was abstracted about noon on that day by a person connected with the bank. As yet suspicion points to no single employe, but it is known that one was connected with the bank was admitted to the vicinity of the vault where the diamonds were stored on the afternoon of the robbery.

"The cashier, when questioned, could said present, for the safety of which the bank is responsible. All the stones are of unusual size and brilliancy. The collection is quite well known to the diamond brokers of the city, and it is thought that none of the stones have been offered here either for sale or pledge. The diamonds are undoubtedly concealed in some secure hiding place for a distant sale. It doubtless was the purpose of the thief to take them abroad as soon as it is safe to do so.

"I wonder if he has left that idea?" thought the reporter.

"As all the employes at the bank remained at their desks that day until the regular hour for leaving the building continued, "it is believed that the thief who over there carried the package decided about his person all the afternoon. As the package was small, this might very easily have been done.

"Late that night a slender man of one and twenty, evidently disguised for the occasion, applied for lodging at an obscure hotel on Randolph street. He simulated intoxication, but the night clerk failed to detect any odor of liquor about him. He had been in only a few days at the hotel, and the rooms were all occupied, so the late guest walked up to the small office until a bed was prepared for him in one of the small parlors on the second floor.

"As he walked he frequently clutched at an inside pocket in the breast of his overcoat, feeling through the cloth as if to make sure of the safety of some article lying within. When the room was ready he registered as 'James Brown, Pittsburg,' and immediately left the office, being shown to his room by a bellboy.

"As the boy started to leave the room, after lighting the gas, he was called back by the guest, who gave orders that if any person called for him during the night he was not to be brought to his room at once. The man did not retire, but was heard pacing the floor of his room until the arrival of the person he had mentioned to the boy, the man who was to be shown to his room as soon as he arrived.

"The guest, who wore a new ready-made suit of some dark material resembling chevoit, and who concealed his face and the upper part of his head and neck by means of a bushy black wig with false whiskers to match, stood in the open doorway of the room as the boy walked down the hallway with his caller. He appeared to be overjoyed at the meeting and the door was closed and locked as soon as the two men had entered.

"The caller was evidently a young man. He wore a blue cutaway suit of some heavy material, bound with wide braid braid at the edges, a black military hat and a black topcoat, threadbare at the cuffs and slung by a strap. His eyes and hair were black and his complexion dusky, in which regard he by no means resembled the guest, whose face was seen distinctly while where not concealed by his black disguise.

"After calling for the bell which had been so hastily prepared for the first comer, their voices were heard in the room all night, and about daylight they went away, parting at the first corner without so much as a handshake or a farewell word.

"The younger man, he in the blue suit and shabby topcoat, went south in the direction of the Lake Shore. He walked rapidly for nearly a square, then slackened his pace and sauntered into a corner saloon. After calling for a glass of beer and a cigar he seated himself by the stove and read the morning paper, which had just been delivered.

"Presently a roughly dressed man wearing a flannel shirt with collar attached and a pair of river boots, into the form of whom a stevedore he got clothes stuffed, entered the place and the two men engaged in conversation, then the dudge man handed the other a small package and departed. In ten minutes the man in the blue suit also boarded a train for the east.

"It is believed that the stolen diamonds were in the package handed over by one hand and taken out of the city. The man in disguise is probably here. He and the stranger would not have taken such elaborate precautions without reason, and in being the case, the hunt for the diamonds points in his direction."

Ellis threw the manuscript on the table with a low whistle of amusement.

"It is a remarkable story," I wonder where she got it, and why she connects the three men mentioned so minutely with the diamond robbery? I haven't much faith in it, still, it may be a police pointer. I will look it over in the morning."

He rose on his overcoat, drank the water in a tumbler on the bracket, and went out. An hour later he returned, all out of breath from a sharp run in the frosty night air, and with a suppressed excitement in his manner. He entered the private door of his own room, but went directly to the city editor.

The city editor looked up from his work as Ellis entered, smiling expectantly when he saw who it was.

"I've just had a call for copy," he said, "and I've come for it. Have you it ready for me?"

"I'm not setting on at all," was the reply. "And I think Miss Roberts belongs in the fiction department of the paper, Ellis."

The city editor took Edith's manuscript and read it through carefully. When he looked up his face was grave and very thoughtful.

"Well?" he said.

"Should she get the story?" demanded the reporter. "The police know nothing of the three men mentioned in it, and everything took place just as she has written it down. I have been to Pittsburg, or, at least, that it was considered inadequate, that Ellis had not the heart to press the matter.

"It is remarkable," said the mother, quietly, but there was a world of remarkable things. How many persons have looked in a mirror and seen there before, yet which seemed perfectly familiar? How many times have people been warned, by a voice which seemed to speak from the pending danger? How often, in the dead of night, have some able-women been told in voiceless words of the death of absent ones? Who denies that the men of old were evolved transpiring too far away for the eye of the physical body to reach? If one strong personality can so affect another, carrying messages and uttering warning by means of the invisible currents of the air, why may not a human mind, first intently upon a single physical thing, be able to believe that physical thing beyond personal control.

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Is so well known as the best Spring Medicine, that upon this simple reminder thousands of people will at once begin to take it. Will you be of the number? Hood's Sarsaparilla has proved by its thousands of great cures that it has no equal for the blood, stomach and nerves. It cures scrofula, salt rheum, boils, pimples, humors, dyspepsia, sharpens the appetite, drives away that tired feeling. It has well won its title, America's Greatest Spring and Blood Medicine. Get a bottle and begin to take it TODAY.

DR. HARTMAN'S ADVICE

Is Sought by Female Sufferers From Ocean to Ocean.

Mrs. F. W. Gaulter, 1246 4th ave. Rock Island, Ill., writes:

"I was afflicted with pelvic catarrh for six years with catarrhal difficulties and was growing worse all the time. I began taking Peruna and with a marked improvement from the first. Independent of curing that, the Peruna has been a great improved my general health. I

feel as though I was worth its weight in gold, especially to me, for I owe my present health to Peruna."

All over the country there are letters being written to Dr. Hartman's Peruna by women suffering with female derangements, for which the family doctor cannot cure.

What a blessing it is for women that Dr. Hartman's Free Advice! So famous has it also made him that hardly a month goes by in the country but knows his name. He cures tens of thousands at home. Write at once any woman who will write to him her symptoms, and her letter will be free, free advice and treatment.

The medicines he prescribes can be obtained at any drug store, and the cost is within the reach of any woman. He does not prescribe for any case, just what she shall do and get to make a healthy, robust woman of her.

The Doctor has written a book especially for this class of women, entitled "Health and Beauty." The book contains many facts of interest to women. He will send a copy free to any address by **Dr. Hartman, Columbus, O.**

tact, even beyond the sense of sight or the sense of hearing?"

"I cannot say what to think," said Ellis. "All the things you mention have taken place, and I'm not in the confidence of the friends of my own; yet, this thing is so new and so strange to me that I cannot quite grasp it. We can only accept what has been given us as fact, and make the most of that fact. I am afraid, however," he added, "that we cannot use the article in the morning's issue. Some one on the police will now be closely scanned by those connected with the diamond robbery, and the publication of such an item at this time would result in putting them on their guard."

"But the information contained in the article," said the girl, with a little sarcasm, "can be used by the paper in working out its own ends."

"Certainly," was the reply, "and we can only hope for success. You have done more things in heaven and earth, and I am sure of course, than are dreamed of in our philosophy, but you know what I mean."

And Ellis bowed and went away in a daze, and more infatuated than ever.

CHAPTER III.

LOCATED AT TOLEDO.

The reporter did not sleep more than the truth when he declared in the presence of the two women that he was dazed. He realized what he had heard to consider the matter clearly. Indeed, the word "astounded" hardly conveys the full meaning of his mind.

He was dazed and leaned back in the cab on his way to the office of the Morning Record like one whose senses had been dulled by the effects of drugs.

For Harry Ellis was known among his acquaintances, in the words of the world, as a "hard-headed fellow," one who was possessed of but little imagination, and he was almost entirely destitute of the poetic sense of humor. At school he had been more apt in arithmetic than in other study, and now he could maintain an argument or analyze a clerk and follow it to its legitimate end with the keen skill of a specialist on the newspaper, but his work never showed the slightest trace of any of the pretty fancies which are becoming so redundant in the mental equipment of modern newspaper writer.

He sneered at hypnotism, discarded the miracles as bibles as having been badly reported, and openly avowed his contempt for paranormal and all events or effects contrary to the established constitution and course of things.

The effect upon such a mind of the remarkable disclosure made by Edith Roberts may well be imagined. At times he even refused to regard the matter seriously, preferring to believe that, through the connivance of the city editor, some monstrous joke was being perpetrated upon him. Then the thought occurred to him that it was all a trick on the part of the mother and daughter, that they had confederates in the matter, and were playing a high hand to advance the importance of the girl in her new position, or at least to render her appearance on the staff so sensational that

she would not long remain on the level of a mere beginner.

But this view of the case held his mind but temporarily, for, was he not in love with Edith? Any theory which stripped her of the sweet atmosphere of child-like innocence and purity in which his unimaginative mind had already enshrined her was not likely to be long considered.

When he reached the office he hastened to the room of the city editor, who appeared vexed and impatient at the delay which had attended the completion of the article concerning the bank robbery.

"Well," said Ellis, throwing himself into a chair, "it is a page from the Arabian Nights, a modern reproduction of the visions of the holy men of old, and I give it up."

"What did she say?" demanded the city editor, almost angrily.

"She said," was the reply, "that no one gave her the information; that she got it out of the air, as she stood there in the bank, looking at the spot where the diamonds had lain. She even knew that I was due for another visit to her tonight, and met me in the parlor in evening costume. It is the strangest, most unaccountable thing on record, and, as I said before, I give it up."

The city editor pondered a moment with his forehead in his hand.

"Write your article," he finally said, "leaving out all reference to the alleged handling of the diamonds by these three men, and then return."

The reporter was not long in preparing his article, for he knew of nothing new to write, having spent a considerable portion of the day and night in the company of Miss Roberts, and another considerable portion the following day with those suggested by her manuscript. He was too excited to bind the matter with police theories, of which a keen reporter always has a goodly stock on hand, and so he wrote out a bare statement of the unsuccessful official movements of the day and hastened back to the city editor's room.

It was long after midnight, and he found his superior sitting with his chair tipped back and his shoes resting at the top of the desk. He was pulling energetically at a huge plug of Swiss-cheese, and as the reporter entered he motioned him to a seat with a wave of its long stem.

Edward Hughes, the city editor, was undeniably a strong man and a resolute. He was dressed in a suit of yellowish brown which sat rather loosely upon his muscular figure, and his square, beardless face was half concealed by swaying clouds of tobacco smoke, which were settling down in the heavy atmosphere of the room.

"Now you have truth," he began after a moment's silence, his black eyes shining keenly through the fragrant mist which enveloped him, "the expected something of this sort when I employed Miss Roberts and placed her in your charge, for I knew something from hearsay of her peculiar mental capabilities. Accordingly, aside, I put her in your hands because I believed you to be her exact opposite in temperament and bent of mind, and the least likely of all my assistants to fall in, through her persuasions or her attractions, with anything out of the ordinary—with anything not explainable by the commonest truths of human life."

"And a nice mess you got me into," said Ellis, with a laugh. "I was beginning to be a dead wall ever since I read the first line of her story. I can't for the life of me see how it is all coming out."

"The case of the girl," continued the city editor, without pause to notice the interruption, "is now assuming an importance which overshadows the importance of the diamond case, and I instruct you to follow it out to the end. Have you at this time any questions to express or suggestions to offer?"

Then Ellis asked a question which he had often asked himself, but which he now blamed himself for putting into words, and which he considered almost an insult to the place of trust whom he regarded with such tender affection.

"Have you considered," he asked, "the possibility of Miss Roberts—through the strong influence of her mother or some other person having a secret knowledge of or deep interest in the purloiner of the diamonds?"

"I have been thinking of that," was the reply, "and have discarded the idea as unworthy of serious consideration. Her positive knowledge of the movements of the three men, and her accurate descriptions of them, it is true, point to a previous acquaintance, but keen and observant informant who was on the spot, or a mental peculiarity almost approaching the miraculous. I prefer to look upon the last proposition as the true one, and the one most likely to produce results."

Ellis looked relieved. The city editor evidently had no definite suspicion and he was glad, both for the girl's sake and for his own peace of mind.

"Then," said the reporter, "if we set to work on the line of your last proposition, it may be interesting to ascertain whether the mother has any personal interest in or knowledge of the bank robbery. As you know, I am not much of a believer in the things that come from eye, but there are plenty of cases on record where a weak mind has been forced to unconsciously do the bidding of a stronger mind. In the preparation of this marvelous manuscript, might not a dual intellect have flown when was in her mother's mind?"

"You have met the mother?" asked Hughes.

"Yes."

"What do you think of her?"

"She looks like a retired actress or a teller of fortunes."

"She has been on the stage," said the city editor, "and is the woman that we found she possessed the same peculiar mental powers now exhibited by her daughter. Has it occurred to you that there might be a strain of criminal blood in her composition?"

"No, still in the educated and outwardly refined criminal, blood flows deep. The mother undoubtedly exercises a very great influence over the mind of the daughter. And, for all we know, the mother may be in league with the man who stole the diamonds."

"In which case," observed the city editor, "the girl's story, although honestly written and proven true by subsequent investigation, is of no value in the present case, for, if implicated, the mother would hardly point the solution. On the contrary, any information she might give through her daughter, or otherwise, would naturally be misleading. It is hardly reasonable that she would meddle with the affair at all if she had guilty knowledge concerning it, especially in this sensational manner. The result would simply be to give the matter an unusual interest in the eyes of the public. And, in the end, connect her with it."

"Very true," was the reply, "and this brings us back to the three men. If we work intently on the knowledge we have, other clews may develop as we proceed."

"You are right," was the reply, "and I think it well to go above and expect great things from this clew. I have faith in the girl and her imagination, however, or we may have another manuscript from her to file away for reference."

At that moment the door opened and the tousled head of the telegraph editor appeared in the room.

"Here is news for you," he said. "Some of the diamonds stolen from the Central bank were offered for pledge in Toledo yesterday afternoon."

Ellis sprang from his chair. The city editor took his feet from the table and sat erect.

"Who offered them?" he asked.

"Rough looking fellow in blue pants in his boots," was the reply. "The officers nabbed him, but the pawnbroker, taking most of the diamonds with him. Thought you would like to know about it. Ta, ta, gentlemen."

"Now," said the city editor, "what do you think of the girl's clew? Nothing misleading about it, eh?"

This very remarkable story will be continued next week. Prospective subscribers are asked to look in the paper for premiums on pages thirteen and fifteen.

Branching Out.

The Hayner Distilling Co., of Dayton, Ohio, has recently opened western headquarters in the long-vacant building at 306-307 South Seventh St., St. Louis, from which to handle the rapidly and rapidly increasing business from the Western and Southern States.

The new offices are practically a duplicate of the large offices and shipping depot in Dayton, and have been moved over from Dayton. Mr. S. L. Gehlinger, the vice-president of the company, will have the management of the St. Louis house.

The Hayner Distilling Co. does its business direct with the consumer and has on its books 80,000 names, which is its regular customers. They own their own distillery, known as Hayner's Registered Distillery, No. 2, Tenth District of Ohio, and for the last 21 years the entire product of this distillery has gone direct to their customers with no middleman between to make a big profit on the whisky.

The specialty of the firm is a package of 4 full quart bottles of seven years old rye or bourbon by prepaid express for $3.20, backed by a capital of half a million, their promise to return money if their goods are not satisfactory, is reliable.

And Now Marsite.

The latest high explosive to claim the practical attention of the United States government is the invention of a Mr. Blake away of Wellsboro, Pa., and is known as marsite. The ordnance bureau of the navy, under the supervision of Admiral O'Neil, has begun the investigation of the material, and preliminary tests have been made under the personal direction of Commander and Joseph Eaton of the navy.

The idea of using nitro must be one in which the elements of safety, resulting from low pressure and great velocity are in delicate combination, for while the inventor claims to have solved the problem. The experiments have proved it a nitrate compound, although its composition is the secret of the inventor. In appearance it resembles dark-colored clay.

In the "glue" class of explosives are this case of handling and its terrific power when exploded. At a recent test at Lovell, Mass., the inventor, in the presence of Commander Eaton and other official witnesses, took a lump of the compound and proceeded to pound it with a hammer, and then to file it to pieces. Although producing a great heat in combination with shock, the explosive showed not the slightest trace of its real character. The demonstration showed that it was impossible to explode it by concussion, and the fire test was not given. In this experiment it merely sizzled like a piece of resin under a direct flame and the fire died out, showing that the two crucial tests proved its safety.

Mr. Hathaway explained that in order to explode it, the combined forces of percussion and concussion must be employed. These were secured from an electric battery, and the explosive power was shown by placing a quantity of it in a four-inch shell, which was put in an excavation in the ground. Over the hole was placed a screen of steel an inch thick, above which a wooden structure was built. When the current was turned on a terrific explosion occurred, which tore a hole in the steel screen and burst the shell into thousands of fragments. When placed between cakes of ice to demonstrate that it is not affected by shock the explosion tore the ice to pieces and cast fragments high in the air.

The safety in handling marsite is also an item of importance, and the ability to fire a shell charged with it from a rifle with the same velocity as 2,000 feet a second makes it a most valuable discovery. Being insensitive to shock and wood, it may be utilized in any climate and exposed to almost any conditions of fire or shock.

Dead Deer's Tail Wagged.

A big buck deer suspended by its heels in front of a game store on upper Broadway created much excitement yesterday afternoon. Suddenly the deer was seen to wagged his tail. The man who first saw the tail wag nearly fainted.

"Have I got them?" he asked himself, and then he stood open-mouthed, watching the tail wag on. A big crowd gathered. In a few minutes the matinee reconvened for the benefit of the deer, and finally the two policemen to clear the sidewalk. Still the deer kept wagging his tail.

Finally the owner of the animal admitted the trick. He had put a small electric battery inside the deer and attached the wires to its tail.

Stuck to His Specialty.

Once upon a time Senator Blackburn of Kentucky and Colonel Pepper of whisky-making fame were in the former's committee room at the capital. They were discussing horses. Representative Crain of Texas entered.

"What are you talking about?" asked Crain.

"Horses," said Blackburn.

"Oh," remarked Crain, "why don't you talk about something worth while? Why don't you discuss literature or something to improve your minds?"

"Literature?" said Blackburn. "What kind of literature do you recommend?"

"I like the poets," remarked Crain. "I am particularly fond of Tennyson and Longfellow."

"Longfellow," interrupted Colonel Pepper, suddenly taking an interest in the conversation. "Oh, yes, I know Longfellow. He is the greatest horse ever bred in Kentucky."

Where Runs the New York Central.

An original poem by one of the poets of the New York Sun, and which has recently been going the rounds of the press.

Where the mild Mohawk meanders,
Where the lakes and pleasant streams,
Among the vales and mountains,
Lie still in silver dreams;

Where the touch of Nature's kindness
Comes down upon the earth,
To paint the smiling landscape
In scenes of radiant mirth;

Of laughing brooks, and meadows,
Where daisies come between
The sunshine and the shadow,
That glorify the green;

Where the mountains in the distance
Sleep silent all the day,
In purple robes of morning,
In twilight robes of gray;

Where hamlet, town and city
Thrive as the green bay tree
Beneath the fost'ring care of
The only N. Y. C.;

There every man is happy.
There every woman blest—
They simply press the button.
The Central does the rest.

—WILLIAM J. LAMPTON.

His New Line of Work.

Excited Citizen—Can't you see those three fellows beating that man to death?

Fair-Weather-Cure Makin' a good job of it, ain't they?

Excited Citizen—But why don't you interfere?

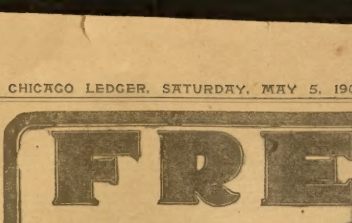
Policeman—Interfere? Me? I am doin' more refined work now. Do you expect a dramatic critic to be makin' in street scraps?

Like a Weaver's Shuttle

They come and go, and go, and come again. There are hundreds of them! A bird-eye view of that section of country between Cincinnati, Toledo, and Detroit, through which ply the numerous passenger trains of the C. H. & D. Railway, would equal in interest the most wonderful Kaleidoscope or Biograph picture! When our Grandfathers wearily walked the tow-path, and toted their own carpet-sacks

THEY DID NOT DREAM

we would ever be offered such opportunities as we are now afforded by the C. H. & D. trains; parlors, dining-rooms, bed-rooms, smoking-rooms—a home on wheels. Steam power, steam heat, electric light and attentive service at small cost. When going North to Michigan, Canada, or the Northwest, please consult nearest Agent of the C. H. & D. Ry. He will gladly assist in every practical way to make your journey a pleasant one.



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A BATTLE FOR JUSTICE.

The Strange Story of Hugh Vinton's Ward --- A Curious Piece of Villiany --- The Valley Iron Works Strike.

By J. HOWARD BAUMAN.

(Copyrighted, 1900.)

Begun in No. 17, April 28. Subscriptions can begin with that number, or back copies can be procured from news stands, or our agents, or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER IV.

SPENCER DECIDES TO ACT A DOUBLE PART.

The disruption between men and owners of the Valley Iron works was as far from settlement as ever on this day. August twenty-first. Young Spencer was sitting tilted back in his chair behind his desk, idly reading a copy of the Herald, and, contrary to his usual habit, was not looking over the personals. One of these seemed to interest him more than the others. This is what he read:

"Personal—Will the person who can give any information as to the present whereabouts of a certain Areta Harlan, last heard from in Colorado, and supposed to be now living in or near Philadelphia, please communicate at once with the undersigned or Arthur Pierpont, Denver, Colorado."

At last Harold Spencer sprang to his feet, in excitement, as he exclaimed aloud: "That must refer to Vinton's ward; she came from somewhere in Colorado. I have always heard her called Dot, but I am certain that her correct name is Areta Harlan. I wonder why she is wanted? There must be some money coming to her from some source; and I guess I will just answer this and find out for sure. Whether there is any money in the deal, you will always find me on hand."

Suiting these words with the action, resulted in Lawyer Pierpont receiving the letter already mentioned; and when Spencer received the astounding reply, that a hundred thousand dollars awaited the right Areta Harlan, he nearly went wild with suppressed excitement. "How can I get some of this money?" was the uppermost thought of his scheming brain. "I might demand a large reward," he thought; but that idea was soon turned down, for he knew the largest reward he had any chance of getting would not satisfy his greed.

Another idea entered his head, and he received it more favorably. He might marry Areta, and then he would secure the whole fortune. "Yes, that will be the proper move on my part. I will then have a word to say about the money until she is Mrs. Harold Spencer; and then it will be too late for her to back out of me. That is the game I want."

Harold knew difficulties innumerable would rise to be battled down; but the enormous reward that would follow success would make it worth the effort. "First of all," he told himself, "I must change my tactics toward the men—not at heart, but in words. I will confess my error to Areta, and then I shall be enough in favor to show how sorry I am for my words against the men. When I am married I will make them will be so glad of the reinforcement her side will have that they will agree to marry me out of pure gratitude, I am sure. I will promise to never say another word against the dear wrong men—damn him—and on the twenty-fifth of September I will cast a solid vote against the hated union, and any request made by its members at any future time. By that time I shall be in great scheme, and I will try my luck; so here goes for the game, with a hundred thousand as the stake."

Spencer lost no time in the commencement of the new part of the day when he met Areta she noticed a decided change in his manner toward her.

"Good morning, Miss Areta; I am glad to see you looking so well today."

"Am I looking so much better than usual this morning?" asked the lady.

"I honestly believe you are, but I have something else to tell you that I know you will be glad to hear. I have changed my mind regarding our laboring men and I am now on your side of the fence, so to speak. Hereafter, I will fight for—not against them."

Shrewd young man; he certainly knew the game he was playing, for it would have been impossible for him to see easier through the girl's heart than the one he had chosen —a base lie.

"Is it really true?" earnestly asked Areta. "It is."

"I am so glad to hear it; for with your support at the directors' meeting we shall surely command the majority of the votes."

"Well, I should say we will; Vinton and I have nearly half the say ourselves."

"And you really intend to cast your vote in favor of recognizing the men's union?"

"Certainly I do." Base lie number two.

"Do you think we are sure to control the vote?"

"Without a doubt we will."

"Guardy will be so glad to hear of your decision to fight on our side."

"I know he will," ironically answered the man; but Areta did not notice his tone of speech; she was too much excited.

"He always had the men's interests so much at heart."

"And I am really glad I saw my folly before it was too late."

"I wonder if that marble-hearted, grim old Hawkins has any influence over the other directors?" asked Areta.

"No; they don't care anything for him."

"Ah, there comes Guardy now," exclaimed the girl, as she caught sight of Hugh Vinton coming down the street. He did not come into the office at once, and when he did he was very much surprised to find such a confidential conversation being carried on between his ward and the young manager of the iron works; for on more than one occasion he had heard her bitterly denounce Spencer's attitude toward the men and his opposition to their cause of justice. Another Areta saw him at the door she exclaimed: "Oh, Guardy! Just think! Mr. Spencer has changed his mind, and he is going to vote on our side at the directors' meeting, which will control the vote easily with his whole hundred on the right side."

A look of doubt crossed Vinton's face, but Harold Spencer stood and faced him so candidly that he asked: "Is it really true, Spencer? Are you going to record your vote on the side of right and justice?"

"I am going to vote as I think," Miss Harlan, I have become aware of my folly and repentant."

"You may be proud of it, Spencer, for it is always honorable to flop from wrong to right," said Hugh, and as he spoke he extended to the vile young schemer the hand of an honest man, and as Harold took the proffered hand a shudder of shame and remorse passed through him; but the thought of the hundred thousand dollar stake that he was playing for was sufficient to quell the rappings of an outraged conscience.

Ten minutes later Mr. Harold Spencer was closeted with the president of the iron works in the latter's private private room.

"I want to have a little talk with you, Mr. Hawkins," he had said on entering.

"All right, my boy; what can I do for you?"

"You do not doubt my loyalty to your side of the labor question; do you?"

"Not for one moment," replied Hawkins.

"Then even if you have cause to do so in the future, don't do it."

"Your words amuse me, Spencer. What do you mean?"

"Simply this: There are certain parties I wish to make believe that I have flopped to the side of the men, injured, heart-broken, laboring man," sarcastically answered Harold.

"Well, what of that?"

"I am going to spread the news broadcast that I am going to vote on the side of unionism on the twenty-fifth."

"What! you are going to vote—"

"Against it every time," interrupted Harold.

"What is your game, if I may be so bold as to ask?"

"A game for a heart first; then for cash."

"And the cash stake amounts to—"

"One hundred thousand dollars."

"Well, I must say you play for high stakes, and I must say deeply scheming; but you must be careful; your opponent may have a hidden card under the table that you may not be able to see one higher; in that case you must look out for breakers ahead."

"Do not worry about me; I have a sure thing of it."

"They say the devil will look after his own," said Hawkins.

"You speak very complimentary, I must say; however, I have another thing that I wish to speak about, and that is, you think will be the outcome of the director's meeting?"

"I feel pretty certain we will carry the day."

"I do not agree with you. I have sounded most all the holders and in the ordinary course of events we will lose."

"What can we do to prevent such a calamity?"

"I know exactly what to do."

"Out with it, then."

"Hugh Vinton must fall to cast his vote."

"Why, man, you must be crazy."

"Not in the least, my dear Mr. Hawkins."

"How would you manage such a thing as you suggest?"

"On the twenty-fourth Hugh will go to Camden to collect the rent of some property he owns there."

"Well, what has that to do with our side carrying the vote?"

"Just this: I happen to know a couple of men in Camden, who for the sake of a few dollars would see that Hugh Vinton did not cross the river again until after the twenty-fifth."

"You would be running a great risk."

"Oh, bother the risk. You have no nerve at all; you are always preaching about the risk even where none exists."

"Do as you like, then," answered Hawkins, sullenly.

"That is just what I intend to do, Mr. Hawkins, and I will promise you that Vinton will fail to attend the director's meeting."

"I wish you success."

As Harold left the president's office a few minutes later that official muttered to himself: "I wonder where that boy came by his base trickery? No person is the father, I am sure; for a more honorable man than Joseph Spencer never lived, I would say."

That same evening Harold walked around to the home of Hugh and Areta. The man had gone out on business and as Areta was all alone it fell to her lot to entertain the caller. During the evening Harold suggested a stroll down the street and as Areta was a little tired she readily agreed to it. The young man proved very entertaining. He used strong arguments in favor of the mill men and thus raised himself several points in the lady's estimation. "I would like to know what will set in old Hawkins' chair next year. I am sure he will miss connection this time," remarked Harold.

"It is sure to be a man that believes in dealing out justice, at any rate," added Areta.

"There never was anything just about Old Crusty, and I am surprised that I never knew it until the other day."

The couple lapsed into silence, which was broken a few minutes later by Harold asking if he could count on Areta to take a drive with him on the following evening.

"For anything else now, I shall be pleased to go with you."

"What time shall I call for you?" asked the young man.

"Any time after seven o'clock."

Harold left her a short time after they returned to the house and then bid Areta good night.

Pleasant soliloquy kept him company on his way home. Now, he believed that it could learn to love that little beauty, even if she was a pauper. He believed that she thinks she is. I am making wonderful headway in my courtship already. If I can keep it up at such a quick wedding after I do win her, all will be well. One thing I must do is to make her my wife in the end if I have to force her to take me at the point of a knife, or that of a pistol. It is a bold game that I am playing and I must play it to the end. Areta Harlan and a hundred thousand dollars in a single trick. Ha! ha! What a lucky hand I am holding in my fingers.

At exactly seven o'clock the next evening Harold presented himself to a lackey in a perfect keeping with the horse, stopped at the residence of Areta Harlan, the latter of which at the present time was on one of the most secluded streets in the old Quaker city.

"Hello, Hugh! How is the world using you?" asked Harold, cheerily.

"I have nothing to complain about," answered Vinton.

Young Spencer tied his horse to the post in the rear of the house, at the point where Hugh was now seated, took a seat beside him.

"Any change in affairs at the mill?" asked Harold.

"Quite awfully anxious for the twenty-fifth to come; I can just picture to myself Hawkins' countenance when he reads his when he gets his walking papers."

"Then you are certain that I would like to know why you changed your attitude toward the men so suddenly; you must have had a powerful reason for it if I remember right, you were always bitterly opposed to anything even hinting of a union in Valley."

"Well, maybe I have other reasons," returned Spencer.

"Yes, I think you have other reasons, and more powerful ones than you would like to ratify your mistakes of the past, as you said yourself, you have seen a clean breast of it. I have good cause for wanting to know."

"If you must on account of your own, I suppose I will have to tell you. I love Miss Harlan, Hugh, and my desire to win her is the true reason for showing my hand in the game I now hold in hands. As her guardian, Vinton, I ask your consent to court and win her as my wife."

"Ha, ha! So that is the game is it? I thought as much, and I will tell you frankly if your intentions are strictly honorable, I will raise no objection to your suit; but if you are playing for cash, you will find me on the other side of the fence, and I will give instant relief and a permanent cure. We will send immediately for a physician to attend to you before writing us. Our remedy is a peasant house treatment and consists of a dose of lead, to be administered by the hand of a physician. Address Iron City Hospital, Dept. X, Charleston, S. C."

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deceives Jim's little girl, I will kill him like the cur he would be. I will protect her, even if my heart's blood must be spilled to do it. For when I meet Jim Harlan on the other shore, I must be able to say to him that I fulfilled my trust."

The strong man bent his head lower, and sobs shook his powerful, manly form.

CHAPTER V.

"REMEMBER, IF YOU ARE NOT AT THIS MEETING BY THREE-THIRTY THE CAUSE IS LOST!"

The employes of the Valley Iron works were quietly awaiting the results of the directors' meeting. The president had made two futile attempts to start the mill with outside labor. The men used no violence; they simply argued the matter with the outsiders, and persuaded them that it would only be a cause for trouble if they tried to operate the works.

On the first occasion Hawkins made arrangement with a contractor who agreed to bring two hundred non-union iron workers to take the place of the strikers. True to his word, at the appointed time the man Mullins arrived at the mill with his followers, two hundred strong.

Jim Harrison was the men's recognized leader since the strike had been declared on. He knew all about the president's plans, so at the time they were expected, he and his chief lieutenants and the strikers took up their positions near the old mill. As the men began to come in sight Jim placed an empty oil barrel directly in front of the gate. Of course that was not his part brought to a halt the foremost men. He did not say a word until all had gathered near him, and in the powerful tones of his voice; then he shouted, as he mounted the barrel, "Men, you cannot enter, before you attempt to enter the mill!"

"Out of the way, fool!" yelled Mullins, as he elbowed his way through the crowd.

"No, I will not get out of your way before I have heard you, sir," quietly answered Jim.

"You won't get one say here!" cried Mullins, angrily.

"You shall see if I don't. Will you listen to me, boys? I won't take up much of your time," spoke Jim, in a friendly tone to the new men.

"Speak out!" yelled one man, about half way back in the crowd.

"Give him a chance, boys; it is no more than we would want!" cried another.

"Yes, let us give him a chance to tell his story," said a third man.

"Speak! Speak!" echoed all along the line.

Contractor Mullins saw it would be impossible for him to prevent Jim from having his say, so he told him in sullen tones that if he were bothered to interfere to hurry and say what he wanted to, as the men wanted to work without any further delay.

"Boys," began the old employee, "gentlemen, you have been compelled to work for your daily substance; you, like the rest of us here, are trying to fill your children's mouths with honest means by the sweat of your brow. Some of the men who who are now living around me have worked in that same old mill for the past twenty years without a break, I, for my part, have always done my duty toward its owners. I was unceremoniously discharged, simply because I acted as the spokesman of the men to ask the president to recognize our union. We have been all decided to stand by each other until the days of our order's existence, and a rule for us to follow. Now, in following out our policy we find ourselves out of work. We did not ask our increase in our wages, nor do we ask it now; we are satisfied with our earnings, as a rule, but this is this: That every man be given his work back again, and that our union be recognized. Some of the officials are not in favor of granting our reasonable demands now, but were opposed to the refusal in the beginning. You men have your own interests to look out for. What concerns our futures, concerns yours as well. Now, I want to ask you candidly, do you love the man who wants to hold you down; who wants to proclaim himself master of your soul and body, do you love him so much that you will say to him virtually this, 'you are right, capital, and I will help you block the wheels of justice. I don't care what you do with me in return, neither do I care what you do with my fellow man; let the old employes starve, they are nothing to me, and I will even help you to starve their helpless children? Do you love them to that extent? Will you ask your own heart if you do? No! No! You know you do not!

"Then, are you now willing by your actions say what you would not dare to allow your tongue to utter words. You have heard my say, men, and I have only one more word to add, the men who are at the back are honest, industrious, hard-working fellows, and would prefer to settle this affair between capital and labor peaceably but we will blow that old mill to hell before we will allow it to turn before we have had justice. There is the door, boys; enter if you will, but remember the consequences will rest on your own heads."

Harrison stepped down from the barrel and opened the door, as he did so, some converted non-unionist yelled at the top of his voice: "Three cheers for the union! Hurrah for Jim Harrison!"

And try as he did, Mullins could not induce a man to enter the mill. Had there been a leader, some of the men would have followed. Jim Harrison's weighty words went to the heart of nearly every man, and their consciences refused to turn and give their fellow men a chance. They obeyed and then ended Hawkins' first attempt to start the mill by outside help.

Hawkins stood in the window and watched all that transpired, but he was not near enough to hear Harrison's words, although he knew he had been baffled when he saw the men turn and quietly leave the place. At this his rage knew no bounds; he paced the floor like a mad tiger.

A few minutes later Harold Spencer entered the room, and as the man's pent-up feelings had to have some outlet, Harold entered just in time to start the flow.

"Spencer, I believe you are playing me false. Would you dare to take an oath that you are not?"

"Certainly, I would do it if I thought it was necessary."

"Then where do all these suspicious stories originate?"

"Didn't I tell you the other night that I had a strong motive in pretending to champion those low cattle?"

"True enough! But I cannot satisfy myself that it is not me you are trying to fool."

"Don't be such a fool as to doubt me any longer then."

"I will try not to; but you know that with Vinton's hundred votes against us, we can't afford to lose yours."

"I told you once, Hugh Vinton would not be present to cast his vote."

"Yes, but what if your plans should miscarry. You know it is an old saying that 'the best laid plans of mice and men often go awry.'"

"I will make sure that my plans do not go awry. I swear I will keep Hugh Vinton from that meeting if I have to sink him to the bottom tof the Delaware," cried Spencer in excitement.

"There! You are desperate, but I hope it is not necessary to resort to such extremes, for you know a charge of that kind awaits a murderer?"

"Rush! Do not use that word to me; it has a very unpleasant sound to my ear."

"I do not doubt it; so you must be very careful what you do. By the way, Spencer, how are you progressing in your love affairs?"

"Oh, I'm making elegant headway."

"It seems to me very strange that Vinton tolerates your presence about his house."

"Well, you see he cannot help himself so long as Miss Harlan agrees."

"About how long do you think it will be before you terminate this novel courtship of yours in a wedding?"

"I hope it will not be long," answered Spencer.

"Is that the most concise answer you can give me?"

"If you are not satisfied with that answer, the next best I can give you is, I do not know."

"Huh! You don't appear to want to be very confidential."

"Truth to tell, Hawkins, I don't."

"To change the subject, Spencer, that which to write to the Denver lawyer, Harold decided to hurry matters and learn his fate at once. Hugh had gone for a stroll down the street. This furnished the desired opportunity and the young man took advantage of it.

"Areta, I have not known you, in the true sense of the word, very long, although I already love you as I never believed it to remain in suspense any longer. I love you dearly and want you to be my wife. I know I have not given you much time to think about me, and I have been in great haste to ask you for such a gift as yourself. I am in a position to grant your most extravagant wishes. Will you not trust your future life in my keeping?"

Harold threw his left arm about the girl's waist, but she pushed his arm away; and the young man could feel her tremble as her hand touched him.

"Don't ask me that yet, Mr. Spencer; I do not know my own mind; I do not even know you as I should before I answer such a question." The girl could hardly control her voice as she spoke.

"Very well, Areta, do not answer it yet; but tell me one thing: have I any grounds for hope?" asked Harold.

"I will promise you nothing; but I will not say your case is entirely hopeless; you must wait awhile," answered Areta.

"Thank heaven for that much encouragement," exclaimed the young man.

"I warn you not to build too much on my words; they might prove the foundation of air castles, and you know they always topple over in ruins," said the girl, laughingly.

As Harold left the presence of his lady love that night his spirits were jubilant. Why, even Areta, herself, almost aloud. "I never saw anything easier; and once I get the marriage certificate signed, I will send Mr. Arthur Pierpont a very polite letter requesting him to pay over the money as Areta Harlan is my lawfully wedded wife, and that all the proof of her identity are forthcoming."

Appearances certainly indicate that Harold Spencer had just came to hold a Jolly fication meeting with himself, but appearances are sometimes deceptive.

When Hugh returned from his walk Harold had already departed. "Guardy," said Areta, pulling him down on the seat beside her, "I want to have a little talk with you."

"All right, my lady, I am at your service."

"I want to know what all these lines of care mean that I see on your brow. They have no business to be there."

"Ho, ho! What a funny thing to ask; as if you didn't know. You see I am getting old; and old people always get wrinkles."

"No you feel old, Guardy."

"Oh, I don't know that I do. Why do you think that?"

"Because I do not think you look old, nor do I think you are old. You are troubling yourself unduly about something."

"Oh, pshaw! You are away off; nothing is troubling me, I assure you."

"Now, Guardy, there is, and it is useless for you to deny it."

"I can't see what gets such foolish ideas as that into your head."

"Oh, Hugh! Why won't you trust me with the truth?" asked Areta.

"Was it a slip of the tongue or was it intentional?" Hugh asked himself. One thing was certain, he was troubled. Then in her life. Areta had called her guardian by his first name. Oh, how sweet the sound to his ear. It was like unto the oasis in the desert; like food to the starving; it was hope in his hungry heart.

"Then I won't deny it any longer, since you forbid; but there is no use of you worrying yourself about my troubles," said Hugh.

"But you see I want to share your trou-

(Continued on page fourteen.)

"Speak! Speak!" echoed all along.

man Harrison seems to me to exert a great deal of influence over the men; I notice they do just as he says in everything."

"I have often noticed it. They certainly look up to him as their leader."

"Hawkins could not exert a single man to enter the mill after he made that little speech of his. I am sorry I did not get to hear it; for I am anxious to know what a man like him could say to make two hundred men leave their jobs without even making an attempt to get the mill started."

"Hawkins is probably telling you just what you wish to know, for the reason I don't know myself."

"I wish we could get him well out of the way for a few days," returned Hawkins.

"You might trump up a charge of riot against him," suggested Harold.

"Oh, yes, that is always open to help another worthless cuss like that," added Spencer.

"Use your brain is very active, Harold, and you don't value your honor to highly, you might put upon some plan to suit the emergency."

"Perhaps I can; and as your head is either too thick; or you are afraid to shoulder your share of the risk, I will see what I can do," returned Harold, with a sneer.

Conversation lagged for the want of something to say, and presently Spencer left the room. The same evening he called on Areta again. As time was fast slipping by, and as only a few days remained in

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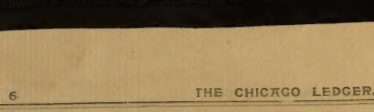

THE WAGES OF SATAN.

Mystery of a Maiden's Birth---The Counterfeiter's Scheme---A Detective's Skillful Defense of a Girl's Estate.

By H. R. ROMANS.

Author of "Lured by Love," "Living a Lie," Etc.

(Copyrighted, 1900.)

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CHAPTER VII.

Frank Morrison had scarcely reached the depot when a train from New Orleans came rumbling in, and among the passengers was Colonel Johnson, who, judging from his facial expression, was in a joyful state of mind. He lost no time in reaching the wheels of his vehicle, and although it was twelve o'clock at night, he did not hesitate in urging up the inmates. His wife was waiting, however, and it was she who answered his ring.

"Well, I hope all is well this time," he cried cheerily.

"Yes," said he at the seminary across the street. I saw her enter there just after dark, and she has not been out since. I sat by the window and watched closely."

"Bravo, Lizzie!" exclaimed the colonel; "you are worth a dozen of the rest of us."

The woman blushed at this commendation, but her practical mind had little place for sentiment just then.

"We must get her at once," she said.

"Oh, the entering will do as well," urged the Colonel. "You are tired and need rest. It does not suggest to the girls' minds, somehow, these institutions are so strict no one could leave there unnoticed."

"No, we must go at once. I am fearful something may happen."

Upon which arguments, then, since you tracked her here, to your honor be runs the matter, and I will go with you."

They crossed the street and rang the bell at the seminary. It took several pulls to awaken the sleepy porter, but finally he appeared.

"We wish to see the principal," said the Colonel.

"Come in the morning at eight o'clock," was the reply.

"Say at once," said the Colonel. "We must see her at once."

The porter went away grumbling, and in the course of a few minutes the principal appeared.

"Pardon us for this unseemly visit, Madam," said the Colonel, with a deep bow. "The fact is, my daughter eloped from New Orleans recently with a young man and we have learned that she is by this institution. We would like to see her."

If this you are mistaken, sir. My last arrival is Miss May Moore, and she was placed here by her brother, who calls often."

"She is the one, without doubt. Will you take us to her?"

"Certainly, sir; but you will find you are mistaken."

She led the way to the room May had occupied. The door was open and there were signs of a hurried dressing and flight.

"What does this mean?" cried the principal. "She is not here!"

Damnation!" ejaculated the Colonel, striding into the room and starting a search at the littered apartment. "She has escaped us again!"

"Be busy!" cried Mrs. Johnson. "Oh, why didn't I seize her on the street? I saw her coupled the way to the room May had occupied. The door was open and there were signs of a hurried dressing and flight.

"What does this mean?" cried the principal. "She is not here!"

Damnation!" ejaculated the Colonel, striking

preferred death with you rather than life with him. A wave separated him from me and the next one brought me near you. I grasped you about the waist and bore you up. My strength was fast going when you recovered consciousness."

"I fear we have found each other but to be lost hastily," he said, calmly.

"Let us hope for the best," she answered, with a calmness that surprised him. "If we are not rescued, at least we can die together."

"That is the sweetest thought that death holds out to me. If we go down to the depths with her in each other's clasp, and you can bear with you the thought that I would gladly give my life for you—the only woman I have ever loved. I will be soothed with the thought that though you do not love me my last breath will be drawn while your arms about me."

"Ah, but George, I do love you. It is cruel that death should rob us of our newfound happiness."

"It is, indeed," he murmured, as he kissed her lips, and though they were drenched with the salty sea he noticed it not, for it was the first kiss of love made holy by complete consecration.

"If we cannot be together in life, in death we will float about beneath the waves, our arms entwined—"

His words were cut short by the sudden appearance of what was a piece of driftwood which in the darkness had been floating beneath and near to them. With a glad shout he caught it and helped May to a place of safety and then he quickly followed her. Their refuge was evidently the cabin roof of some wrecked steamer, that, freed from its anchorage among the reefs had floated to them in time to save them from other dreadful fate that had seemed so near.

"This harbinger of good luck gives me renewed hope," cried May, joyously, as she stood up and wrung the water from her dripping skirts.

"Yes, it is indeed a good omen. The wind is from the shore and if drifting us farther out to sea, but the mere fact that we have found this raft ought to lead us to believe that Providence did not intend that we should be drowned. We shall be rescued in good time, and the day is not far distant when we may cement our love with marriage." Clasping the fair maiden then in his strong arm, he kissed her again and again.

"Don't you think we owe God something for this happy deliverance?" she asked him.

George looked at the storm-tossed sea the world, but he would not have thought of asking Providence for their timely rescue had she not mentioned it. The suggestion was so characteristic of the girl's nature, and seemed a sweet coming from her lips that he loved her all the more.

"Yes, I think we should, but the prayer must be offered by one who is good enough to thank Him. I will kneel by your side and repeat from my heart what you say with your lips."

And there on that frail raft, many miles from land, the simple, trusting girl knelt and thanked God for preservation from death, and cast heir trust in Him for all the future.

It was far from pleasant to sit upon the wet raft and be drenched over and anon by the waves that broke over the edge. The wind that blew from the land was cold and chilled them to the bone, but huge billows up their drooping spirits, and thus they clung close and shivered until the yellow streaks of dawn began to melt the blackness of the east.

As the sun approached nearer and nearer to the horizon the breeze changed perceptibly and the raft was carried more directly seaphy blowing toward land. Soon the crest of the day dawn appeared from out the sea far to the east. The mellow rays glistened and shimmered upon the waves and bathed the heroine in a halo of glory. The warmth it shed upon the castaways brought renewed hope to their faces and with hearts aglow with happiness they looked about over the surface for signs of a sail, or were they disappointed when none was seen, secure in the thought that fate had not intended them to drown, they awaited patiently the coming of the craft they were sure would soon be provided for them.

Far in the distance to the north could be seen the smoke of the city, and George was positive they could not be very far away from land.

Something after six o'clock May descried a black object some two miles to the south. She called George's attention, and they studied it closely, but were unable to determine what it was. As the minutes went by it became apparent that the object was approaching them and shortly after the discovery was made they clearly discerned that it was a rowboat.

"It is Shepard, as sure as we are alive!" "I trust not," said May.

"Who else could it be? The fishermen who come out as far as this use sail boats. No one would venture so far out in a row boat. But see, he is going to pass some distance from us. We will he upon the raft and maybe he will not see us."

They took this suggestion, and the next fifteen minutes were like so many hours. Soon he was abreast of them, but many rods on one side. He was rowing straight ahead, his head hanging down as if he were weary.

"If he only goes on without looking up," breathed George as he surveyed their escaway.

Shepard rowed along steadily, his boat making good headway, as the tide was running in. He had gone by them several rods when he glanced to the left; his gaze immediately rested upon the raft and its occupants. So startled by the sight he stood up in the boat the better to determine what to had found. A shout of joy disclosed to the couple that they were discovered, and then Shepard turned his boat and sent it spinning toward the raft.

"Well, this is luck," he exclaimed, as the boat touched the edge of the raft. "I had given you both up as lost."

"If it's all the same to you we are willing to stay lost," remarked George, with cutting irony.

"I am perfectly willing you should," remarked Shepard, smiling, "but I prefer to take the young lady in hand with me."

"I will attend to her handing," answered George.

"Will you?" demanded Shepard, drawing a revolver from his pocket and covering George with it. "Now, Miss Johnson, I order you to climb into my boat immediately."

"I refuse!" declared May.

"If you don't I will shoot your lover."

May looked with horror upon George and then stepped into the boat with Shepard's demand.

"Don't you go, May!"

"He will shoot you if I don't," she cried. "It was all for love of me that he came, you are not armed and he has me at his mercy."

"Nevertheless, I command you to stay here. If you love me you will heed my desire."

"Come on there," demanded Shepard, getting impatient. "This is no time for a lover's quarrel. If you don't come I'll fill you as I did—"

"It's for your sake, dear," cried May, entreatingly, yet with grief that was unmerciful to behold.

"Stay," thundered George. "We are at his mercy, I know. Let him do his worst; if he will let me then you will go if you wish to save your life; if you want to stay with me we remain here and handy will cheat him of his prey."

"Well, if you want it, then take it!" cried the man, and he fired at George. His aim might have been good, but the rocking of the boat, as each sentence fell, and the bullet whizzed by and sank into the water some distance away. Before he could fire again May was between him and his living target. Her arms were wound about his neck and so completely did she hold her body him that Shepard was afraid to fire again for fear of striking her.

"Curses on the luck!" he cried, "Get out of the way there or I will shoot you both."

"Shoot!" cried May, "I dare you to shoot!"

"Will you get in the villain's way to the way hurt May and so he stormed about and swore. It was of no avail to bring the boat to bear upon the new direction. It was easier for May to move than it was for Shepard to change the boat. With a quick motion he drew away some distance and then bending to the oars, forced the boat full upon the raft, almost tipping it over. In the same instant he seized one of the oars and turning suddenly struck at George as they stood together, across their heads. George received the blow on his left arm and was knocked senseless to the raft.

"Now, you villain, I command to knock her down and before she could get to her feet the ruffian had her pinned to the slipping raft with his left arm.

"You will get away?" he sneeringly asked. "Release me!" demanded May.

"Ha! ha! Yes, of course I will, but not just cause! You ought to know that it is much trouble to get away so easy as all that."

He tied her hands together with a handkerchief and then rifling George's pockets he secured a penknife, with which he cut her ankles, despite her struggles. Then he lifted her up and bore her across the rail of the boat. He shoved it clear of the raft and climbed in.

"I guess I'll make sure you won't escape me again," he said, as he tied her to one of the seats.

"Aren't you going to take him with us?" asked May, as he commenced to row away from the raft.

"Well, hardly. You see I haven't any particular need of him. I haven't anything against him except that he is too aggressive in matters that concern you. Now, when you are my wife he might come bothering around and cause trouble. It is best to leave him out here to feed the hungry fish."

"Oh, you monster!" she cried, in agony at being thus bereft of her lover.

"Of course I expect you to make some trouble at first, but after a while you will forget him. A live lover is much better than a dead one, you know, and after we are married awhile you will learn to love me as much as you do this fellow."

"Never! You cannot force me to marry you against my will."

"Oh, I can't? Well, I have a justice of the peace friend here in Mobile who will oblige me even if you do remonstrate. Besides, marriage is the best course for you. You are mine anyhow, whether you consent to the ceremony or not, and it seems to me marriage would be preferable to the other."

"I'll kill you if you force me into such a union," she said, with a hate that was searching.

"My, but you are pretty when you fire up that way. It makes me all the more anxious to tame you. Your parents will not object, you know."

"They are not my parents," she exclaimed.

"Who told you?" he asked, in surprise. "So it is true, is it? What is my real name?"

Your name will be Shepard in a short time." In like manner he tortured her until he had rowed to the shore, which was reached about noon. Calling some rough fishermen to his aid, they carried the bound girl to a fishing shack.

Shepard gave one of the men some money and told him to go to the court house and get a marriage certificate, for the people whose names he wrote on the back of an envelope and gave him. Then he was to tell Justice Evening on Clark street to come immediately and perform the ceremony.

"Now, my pretty bride-to-be," exclaimed Shepard, entering the shack, "we will have something to eat while we await the coming of the paper and the good justice. In less than an hour you will be my wife, and then we will return to New Orleans and surprise your parents."

Sick at heart, poor May declined to answer him. There was nothing to keep him from fulfilling his awful threat. Her lover was lying perhaps dead out in the gulf; Helen and Mr. Herndon were married in Florida, and there was no one to whom she could appeal. Marriage was better than the awful alternative he offered; perhaps if she consented to the marriage he would relax his vigilance long enough to allow her to escape. Which should she accept—death or marriage?

Further chapters of this fascinating story will appear in the Ledger, but here we respectfully referred to the Ledger's handsome free premiums on pages thirteen and fifteen.

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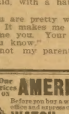

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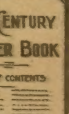

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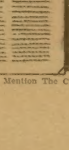

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Getting His Dutch Up.

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"I suppose you have quite forgotten, Mr. Jones, that you owe me a fiver?"

"No, I haven't, yes. Give me time and I will."

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He Could Afford To.

Guest (trying to be agreeable)—What an enormous number of magazines you must read, Mr. Millions. I notice your library table is piled high with them.

Millions (testily)—Must, my dear friend—must? I hope you'll admit I can afford to subscribe to every magazine that is published without being obliged to read one of them.

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With bitterness of soul exclaimed:
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The men who serve my meals wear stand-up collars,
And when they stoop their vests nor rip nor crack.
"My income's many hundred every hour,
I've yachts, a private car and fruitful lands,
And yet, alas! I am denied the power
Of lacing up my shoes with my own hands!"

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Inordinate Greed for Notoriety.

"And what are you going to be when you are a man?" asked the conventional visitor, for the thousandth time.

The conventional little boy at once realized that something bright was expected. Said he:

"I mean to be a actor in the winter and a baseball player in the summer."

Side Lights on History.

"But why?" asked one of Hercules' neighbors, "are you in such a surry to clean these old stables of Augeas on this particular day?"

"Because," moodily answered Hercules, "Megara has one of her housecleaning spells on, and I've got to do something or go crazy."

Superfluous Effort.

"Here's a quarter for you, poor man," said the sympathetic old lady, "and I hope you will stick to your resolve never to be dishonest."

"I will, mum," responded Weary Watkins. "Wot's der use ov stealin' when yer kin git money dis easy."

2.

The Modern Murder.

"Oh, why," moaned the hapless victim, "do you kill me?"

"Because I am of unsound mind, of course," retorted the assassin, brusquely.

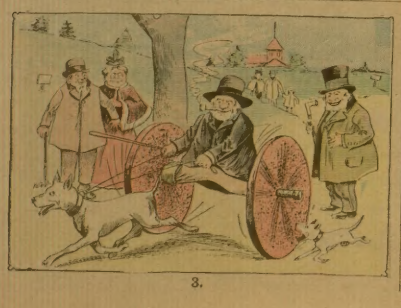
For this was no time to be asking questions which in the light of even a casual knowledge of contemporary jurisprudence answered themselves.

In Doubt.

"Say," said the elderly printer with the spectacles.

"What is it?" asked the younger compositor.

"Read this line for me. I can't make out whether the duffer is saying the Boers will fight to the last ditch or the last Dutch."



3.

THE CLEVER DEVICE OF AN UNFORTUNATE OLD SOLDIER.

1.

Not as It Shou'd Be.

The Parson—Learn to be content, my good man. The little mouths are never sent without food to feed them.

The Laborer (father of ten)—Ah, parson, but the mouths are sent to my home and the food to yours.

A Footlight Fantasy.

Visitor (behind the scenes)—It seems strangely quiet here, when so many ballet girls are dressing in the rooms around the stage.

Stage Manager—Well, you see, there is almost nothing going on at this time.

The Way to Rise.

"Yes," said Youngman, as he carefully selected a red necktie with blue polka dots in it, "I would advise all you fellows who stand behind the counter to get married. It's the only sure way of becoming floor walkers." And with a fiendish chortle he left the store.

The Evidence of a Bill.

"A man with a bill," announced the court chamberlain.

The king was visibly startled.

"He must be a bird!" replied his majesty, thinking of the rigorous measures he had taken to prevent creditors approaching the royal person.

Two Hands to Each.

Secretary—I see the bible trust has raised the price of bibles 2 per cent.

Oom Paul—That's a serious blow, indeed! To keep down expenses I'll have to make arrangements to have two soldiers carry one bible between them.

At the Seat of War.

First Correspondent—A native runner has arrived, but the Boers waylaid him and he swallowed his dispatches.

Second Correspondent—Oh, well, that's probably more than the public would have done.

Utilizing His Misfortune.

First Tramp—Say, you did get a bad eye in dat scrap.

Second Tramp—Yes, but the odder feller got two, he's workin' it on de public as an explosion.

The Proper Gender.

"David, what makes you call liquid air 'she'?"

"Why, when it gets started nothing can stop it."

In the Wings.

"Walker says he has a part in the new play that is sure to take."

"Yes, they have cast him as a pickpocket."

The Cornfed Philosopher.

"By the way," said the Cornfed Philosopher, "I think I may take advantage of this being the gardening season to remark that there is often very little difference between a budding genius and a blooming idiot."

Drop.

"The Colonel's been getting the drop on somebody, I guess."

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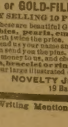

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THE BOY WHO REQUIRED WINDING

A TALE OF YANKEE ENCHANTMENT

BY CHARLES BATTELL LOOMIS

(Copyright.)

You boys who are wound up to run through a whole life time and whose machinery so seldom gets out of order—that is if you are out of doors a good deal and don't spend your time reading improbable tales—ought to be able to appreciate the sad case of Jimmy Whortleberry of Winchester, Massachusetts.

Jimmy looked and acted and felt like other boys—with one exception. He had to be wound up like a clock every day. Just at the back of his neck there was a little keyhole and he was wound up with a silver key that fitted into it.

It's no use for you to ask me to explain why, or how or anything else. Some things have to be taken on trust.

Jimmy had a very remarkable mother. She was always thinking of Jimmy's comfort and Jimmy's pleasure and she was so kind to him that he actually loved her.

Now a great many mothers have to do a good deal for their boys. They have to remember where the cap was thrown when the boy came home from his play, they have to know where he left his skates and what became of his top, but I never knew of any other mother that had to remember to wind her son up every morning before breakfast. You see the keyhole being in the back of his neck, Jimmy couldn't reach it himself. But his mother was only too glad to keep the boy going for he was such a cheery little lad. Up to mischief and dreadfully full of animal spirits, but well worth winding up, for all that.

To the funniest performance—his winding up. I was there on a visit once and I saw Mrs. Whortleberry wind him. She put the pretty silver key into his neck and began to turn it and the clock ran through his veins with a sweet clinking noise that sounded like music borne miles and miles away. Jimmy always liked to be wound up. It was like taking a tonic. He would run and jump and sing gaily and act for all the world as if he had been charged with electricity.

Not half the boys in Winchester that played with Jimmy knew that he had to be wound up for he was just as natural as any boy and could climb and skate and wrestle with the best of them.

One day the boys got up a foot race. In this they were aided and abetted by old Mr. Dixon. They were to walk from Winchester to Arlington Center and back again for a silver medal that Mr. Dixon had promised to the winner. Old Mr. Dixon is a silver-haired gentleman and all the boys like him because he is still a good deal of a boy himself in spite of his seventy years.

"I think that Jimmy will win if he doesn't run down," said Mrs. Whortleberry.

"Run down, indeed," said Mr. Dixon, hotly. "Jimmy won't run down when he knows it is a boys' match. He'll win fair, you may depend on it." From which it will be seen that Jimmy was a favorite with the old man.

The race was to be run on a Saturday. It so happened that the night before Mrs. Whortleberry was taken ill with an attack of grip and in the morning she was too sick to rise.

She told the maid to wind Jimmy but the maid was a rather feather-brained creature and forgot all about it, and as for Jimmy, he was so full of the race that he never noticed that he had not been wound. Of course, just as it is with clocks, so he could run several hours overtime, as he was able to go down to breakfast and then run in and kiss his mother good-by and tell her that he was sorry that she was too sick to come and see the start.

Just as he was leaving the room she called out, "Are you wound up, Jimmy?" but he was half-way down stairs by that time and didn't hear her. He got on his cap and started off at a dog trot for Mr. Dixon's house, for that was to be the meeting place for the contestants.

There were Chelsea, Concord and Dorchester Medford and Waltham and Somerville Newton and his brother Center of Newton.

Old Mr. Dixon was in tiptop spirits and gave each of the boys an orange. The start was to be made from the Winchester library and was to go over the line of the railroad road as Arlington sang at the railroad station and coming back over the same route.

Jimmy felt unusually buoyant. He bounded around and Mr. Dixon said: "Boy, if you'll save some of that energy for the race I haven't a doubt but you'll win the medal."

Elgin Waltham knew that Jimmy had to be wound up and he said, "Did they wind you extra, tight, Jimmy?"

Jimmy's face went white as it struck him that he had not been wound at all, but then he didn't thought he'd probably get through all right, so he said nothing. But he stopped jumping and said, "Let's hurry up and get to the library."

There was quite a crowd of Winchester people at the library for the local paper had contained a notice of the coming race and as it was Saturday nobody in town had anything to do. That is, nobody that counts for anything. I believe some of the grown ups did have some work to attend to, but after all what are grown ups? Only children that have outlived their usefulness. You'll have great times when you grow up and some of you won't regret that you are no longer children, but I tell you that when a fellow is a boy everything is fresh and new and he doesn't know it all, even if he sometimes thinks he does. When he grows up he doesn't know it all either, but he certainly does know that he was awfully lucky to have had a boyhood and the more he keeps his memory on it the better time he will have when up to the end of the chapter.

At ten o'clock old Mr. Dixon started them off. It was to be a square heel and toe walk and for a block they kept pretty close together. Then Jimmy and Elgin began to walk away from the others and it began to look as if it were going to be between them. But it's a long way to Arlington and by the time the boys were getting their force for the end of the contest so there was hope even for plodding Dorchester Medford, who at the end of the first mile was two blocks in the rear of the procession.

Mr. Dixon had hired a wagon and he rode along, cheering the boys and urging time to do their best.

"Say, this is going to be dead easy," said Jimmy. "I'll lies between me and you and I bet I'll win." He and Elgin were neck and neck.

"You'll have to take an electric to do it, then," said Elgin, with spirit. "Anyhow a boy that's wound up ought to go faster than a plain, every day boy. I don't think he was fair to let you."

Again Jimmy's heart sank. What if he should run down? He felt all right but he knew that when he stopped he'd stop all at once and without winding.

"Don't talk, walk," said he, shortly, and pegged away, his little legs going like the necks and feet with the regularity of piston rods.

When they reached Arlington, Medford had crept up to fourth place and Somerville Newton was neck and neck with Elgin, but Jimmy had gained the lead and was steadily increasing it.

Around the flag pole they went and around the station and back across the tracks, old Mr. Dixon cheering them and giving all the most apoplectic with his exertions.

"It's Jimmy!" he shouted, and any one could tell that he was glad. Well, Jimmy was a general favorite and next to winning it himself every boy would rather have seen Jimmy win it than any one else.

The pace began to tell on them all on the way back, but they were game lads and while the old gentleman rode along as pacemaker, they would not have given up if the way had been ten times as long. They were all Massachusetts boys and there are no finer boys than those babies it is the boys of the rest of the United States.

They were within a quarter of a mile of the home stretch when Jimmy began to slacken his pace. This encouraged Medford who had gradually working his way up in the procession and he passed Somerville with a rush. Then Elgin and Elgin and steadily advanced until he was within a foot of Jimmy. It was then a remarkably close race and nobody had dropped out.

No one should have seen Mr. Dixon's face when he saw his favorite losing ground. As for Elgin, he was so encouraged that he broke into a run and, of course, lost his chance of winning.

For one brief moment Jimmy thought that he had run down but when he realized that he couldn't move a step after the machinery had stopped, he gave a spurt and increased his lead by three feet. There was now just an eighth of a mile left and the race looked to be Jimmy's for Medford was walking his prettiest and couldn't gain an inch on the leader.

The beautiful building of the Winchester library is now in sight. A crowd of Winchester's best citizens are standing there ready to cheer and shouting. Jimmy's father is among the number. Jimmy sees him and wishes that his mother might be there, too.

Five hundred feet more and Jimmy will be champion.

But the mechanism had reached its limit of running. The maid had lost the race for him because she had forgotten to wind him. Down in the road he dropped, his arms and legs sprawling out once or twice, his legs kicked a little and he lay an inert mass on the macadam.

And then Medford did a very noble thing. Disdaining the fact that it was now his race, he stepped out and stooped to pick up Jimmy and Somerville Newton walked in over the line and won the medal amid the perfunctory cheers of the Winchesterites.

A doctor ran up to Jimmy, but Elgin Waltham said, "You're not what he wants; he wants a key."

The doctor thought he was insane, but Elgin started for Jimmy's house to get the key and ran plump into Mr. Whortleberry.

"The key, the key," he gasped.

Jimmy's father had seen his son fall and like every other member of the Whortleberry family he carried a key that would wind the little boy.

He ran to the boy and said to the doctor: "I am his father. He only needs winding."

That doctor was the most astonished physician in eastern Massachusetts, but he said nothing. The bystanders saw Mr. Whortleberry insert the key and then they heard a faint and musical sound, which, as I have said, was Jimmy's blood coursing through his veins and then the boy's legs began to work back and forth and his arms to pump and he rose to his feet and went on with the race.

"Jimmy boy," said his father, sadly; "the race is over. It would have been yours if only you had been wound up."

Poor Jimmy realized then what had happened and being a boy, even if he did have mechanism inside of him instead of vitals, he burst into tears.

And then occurred a pretty scene.

Somerville Newton went up to Mr. Dixon, who was hastening to shake hands with Jimmy and he said in a loud voice so that all could hear.

"I don't think we ought to call this a race. If it had been a race Jimmy would up and he'd never have entered. Say we have it again next Saturday."

"Hooray!" shouted all the boys, including old Mr. Dixon.

"Mamma sent me to get a hair brush."
"What sort of a hair brush do you want?"
"I want one with a soft back."

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The scandals that have grown out of the purchase of legislatures by senatorial aspirants are matters of notoriety. The most recent of these comes from Montana, one of the wild western states. There would be no opportunity for any such thing if the people of Montana elected the senator. There is another state in Pennsylvania, where a man is attempting to break into the United States senate after his own party had turned him down. It has come the state of Illinois in the past hundreds of thousands of dollars to elect senators by the legislature.

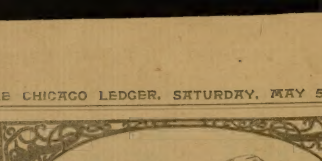
It is a matter of fact that legislatures after a senatorial election begin to pay little attention to the transaction of the business of the people, which is what they are elected for. The interest in the senatorial fight absorbs all the attention. There is no state that would lose any rights by the election of senators by the people. We honestly believe that the people are demanding that the change be made. At the same time we very much doubt if the senate will for many years vote for the submission of any such amendment to the constitution to the legislatures of the different states. If it ever comes before the latter there is a certainty that will be adopted. In the meantime the senators should be put on record on the matter.

We have it on the most reliable authority that last year the Carnegie company, which, with the Bethlehem iron works, an allied concern, is largely engaged in the production of armor and shellships, realized profits of $22,000,000, and that the prospective net earnings this year will be approximately $30,000,000.

Less profitable, but still very remunerative, is the market for cannon, shells, rifles and other weapons of war the civilized governments are constantly engaged either in increasing their armament or in exchanging guns for more effective types of weapons. Every year millions are being voted by the various legislative bodies for such purposes, and the factories are constantly kept busy, with periodical spurts occasioned by the extra demand incident to war.

Even countries so little affected by the current of events as Sweden and Norway cannot escape the influence which prompt nations either to engage in war or to prepare for conflict. Although a clash with another government seems very remote, the riksdag has just voted 12,000,000 kroner for new artillery, 2,000,000 kroner for ammunition, $20,000 kroner for the equipment of volunteer rifle associations and an additional sum for naval construction.

He who would enjoy perpetual prosperity should invest in a gun plant or powder works.



THE BLACK DAGGER.

Story of the Strange Mascot Mystery---The Fire of Human Hearts --- Who Killed Lord Basil?

By T. C. HARBAUGH,

Author of "A Sinner at Bay," "Man in Gray," etc.

(Copyrighted, 1900.)

Begun in No. 12, March 24. Subscriptions can begin with that number, or back copies can be procured from news stands, or our agents, or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER XXV.
THE AGENT OF DEATH.

Meantime Donald Black, the detective, was pursuing his investigations.

He could not forget the rescue of Hugo, the hunchback, from a terrible death, on the rocks, and he knew that he need not question the dog, for Hugo had a scent which he would keep and in his own time turn against the person who had hurled him to his fate.

Donald resolved to find out what lay in the pearl button case, and he waited again the scene of the murder of Lord Mascot.

The corridor was dark and forbidding, but the detective's light revealed the place. It was the night following the funeral, and Donald, saying nothing to the tenats of the Hall, went alone down the corridor to the tragic spot.

He had seen nothing of Hugo since the scene in the library, but he knew where he acted out his private theatricals with the black dagger; he did not know whether the dog was back and kept his room since, or whether he had stripped from the Hall on a mission of his own.

The detective found the exact spot where Valerie had discovered the pearl button and examined it closely. There was nothing to explain the presence of the button in that strange place, and he was about to quit it when his ears caught the sound of the opening of a door.

In an instant the detective put out his light and hugged the wall.

Some one was coming down the corridor. Valerie? No, for the footsteps were a woman.

The unseen, whoever it was, was coming on in dense darkness, and Donald Black, almost smiling at the strange turn in which he found himself, seemed to force his body into the wall itself.

On, on came the strange one in the dark.

Donald Black felt that a crisis was near at hand, and in a few seconds the unseen one passed him, brushing his clothes by the internal touch.

The unseen moved further down the corridor and the detective bowed a sigh of genuine relief.

All at once he heard a voice that rewarded his ears with a shock and thought that he could have touched the maker.

"Hang it all, what has become of him?" growled the unseen. "I saw him enter the corridor by the window and I am here on business. He must be here yet, or is there some other way out of this maze? There's a thing here that I must have, and I don't want to go back without accomplishing my mission. But I'll find him."

"You will not go without finding some one," thought the detective, who drew a hair across one of the stones of the wall and the blaze for a moment illuminated the scene.

There was a sharp, quick cry after the flash and Donald Black was prepared now to face with a man.

This person was large, wiry and a veritable athlete.

The eyes that looked from the depths of his large head seemed to shine with the luster of rattlesnakes, and Donald noticed that one of his hands was held behind his back as it grasped a knife or was about to be launched toward the foe.

The man stood in the middle of the passage, but as the detective's light fell on him he slunk to the wall from which he glared at the detective with the ferocity of a tiger.

"You're looking for me, eh?" said the man from Scotland Yard.

The only answer he got was another growl and the stranger stepped forward as if for a spring.

Donald Black saw that he must open the battle if he did not want to be thrown against the wall and perhaps overpowered by main strength by a sudden leap on the other's part, and the next instant he threw himself straight at the big fellow.

To do this he had to discard the match, and it burned on the stones affording him light enough for his purpose.

"That's your tactics, eh?" came from the big man's throat, as the agile sleuth fell upon him. "I see——"

Further words were lost as the two men went to the ground together, the detective on top and the big man struggling with the powers of a giant underneath.

"It's life or death," flashed through the detective's brain. "This villain came thither to put an end to me and I must conquer here or never solve the Mascot mystery."

Fortunately for the detective he had taken the big fellow off his guard and this was a decided advantage.

He had more points in his favor than had the other man and he proceeded to back them up with all the agility and strength in his power.

It would have been an unequal battle if the attack had come from the other side; but, as it was, the detective had boldly taken the initiative and far his own good.

His eager hands found the other's throat in spite of his efforts to prevent, and he did not hesitate to stick his fingers behind the windpipe and close in with all his might.

The fierce fight almost turned the tables on Donald Black, but the detective's alertness prevented what would have been a deadly catastrophe, and a few seconds afterward he had the pleasure of knowing that his wrists were unsevered.

The man was supine on the ground and in his power.

He had choked him till he began to fear that he had carried the job a little too far, and when he drew off and struck another man the fellow lay unconscious at his feet.

Donald Black re-lit his lamp and placed it on the ground beside his foe.

"He'll come round all right," he said, gazing at his prostrate victim. "I take the initiative a moment too soon for there was a flaw in his grip.

He waited patiently for the man to "come round," but meantime he went through his victim's pockets, discovering but a dirty handkerchief. A knife of formidable proportions lay on the ground where it had dropped from the man's hand in the struggle.

Presently the fellow moved and looked half vacantly around him.

He caught sight of the detective and the battle in the dense darkness seemed to come back.

Donald Black took a step nearer.

"Well, you have given me a good time," he said.

The face of the unknown came together with decided firmness and the eyes turned away.

"Who are you and why were you looking for me?" continued Donald.

Again the man maintained silence, but his look was hard and cold as before.

"I never saw you before, yet you came here to kill me."

The man only growled the big man.

"It wasn't your fault, that's pretty certain," said the detective. "Who sent you?"

"I came on my account."

"That is not true," exclaimed Donald. "I don't see why the fellow should have wanted to go back without accomplishing his mission."

The man on the ground swallowed hard. He looked at the steel handcuffs, which Donald had taken from his pocket, bent over his wrists and then glared at the detective again.

"Somebody must know you," continued the sleuth from London. "We'll soon settle this point."

"I know his enemy lying on the ground and darted back, running down the corridor toward the entrance to the library. "

As he passed the secret door he started back, for the room was well lighted and Valerie, the fair one, uttered a cry.

It was Valerie!

"This way," cried the detective. "The corridor has caught a rat."

The fair mistress of Mascot Hall came forward, and Donald followed with the ferret back into the passage.

He halted and stared with his manacled hands leaned against the wall as he seemed to await his captor.

"This is the rat, miss," said the detective, pointing to his prisoner. "Do you know him?"

Valerie leaned toward the snarling fellow and looked at him long and closely.

"I know him now!" she suddenly cried. "It is Carl, Lady Judith's watch-dog. What did he want here?"

The man only showed his teeth and his fierce eyes turned their baleful light again upon the detective.

CHAPTER XXVI.
THE NIGHT RUN.

Carl had fallen into a trap of his own setting and he had not expected the turn affairs had taken.

In his sullenness he thought of his mistress and the solemn compact they had entered into; but he had failed to keep his oath.

He eyed both Valerie and the London detective like a basilisk, and had he been unshackled he would have tried to complete his work.

But as it he was powerless.

Donald Black resolved to keep the man a prisoner at the Hall and shortly after showing him to Valerie, who recognized the villain, he was escorted from the corridor to a small room in the west wing of the mansion.

Looking at him sharply when he again found himself alone with him, Donald Black took from his pocket something carefully wrapped in tissue paper.

Carl did not appear to regard him at first, but all the same he was restlessly watching his every movement.

The deliberate detective seemed an age in exposing the particular object in his hand, but at last he held the pearl button up to Carl's gaze.

The stolid face of the man-servant showed no signs of recognition, and for some time Donald Black let him look at the button.

"Do you know that?" said the detective at last.

"Why should I when there may be thousands of them in the world?"

"But this particular button is the one I speak of---the one I have held in my hand."

Carl turned his eyes away and looked as sullen as ever.

"You've no right to hold me here," he said.

"You will be released when you talk."

The prisoner started a little.

Was it a promise made to be broken---a trap to catch him?

"What do you want to know?" he asked.

"Who sent you on your murderous mission tonight?"

"How do you know I came on such?"

"The naked knife proves that," smiled Donald Black. "You came here to kill me for a human life."

"That's your theory. I know you people. You found me in a compromising place, but I'd heard of the old lord's death."

"But you did not come here, for it is known everywhere that they was stolen the night of the murder."

Carl did not reply.

Donald still held the button in his hand.

"You say you never saw a button like this?" he said.

"Lots of them."

"Where?"

"I went to Lunnun once," and the man grinned.

Black rewrapped the button in the tissue paper and transferred it to his pocket again.

"When you talk you will be let out," he said, walking toward the door.

"You're not going to put me here."

Black made no reply to this, but shut the door and locked it behind him.

Down in the library Valerie awaited him and the young girl's face showed the sagacity of her spirit.

"Well?" she asked.

Donald was secretive as a sphinx. Carl has been schooled in diplomacy.

"You showed him the button?"

"Yes."

"He denied ever seeing it?"

"He said he has seen hundreds such in London."

Carl man has a secret which he does not divulge. He came to Mascot tonight with a knife in his hand, but some one met him."

"Of course and who would send Carl but his mistress, Lady Judith?"

"No one else," cried Valerie. "You did not think of having Hugo identify Carl? He was not around long enough for me," was the reply, "but the two men being brought face to face might result in something."

Donald Black went in person to Hugo's room and entered, for the door was not locked.

The place where he had seen the hunchback carry out his hideous pantomime with the black dagger was empty.

The detective crossed the room to the table in the west wing and took up a pad and pencil, and eagerly thrust his hand into it.

Like the room it was empty.

Hugo had evidently had undoubtedly taken the black dagger with him.

Donald Black knew that it was a little place without obtaining any clue to the dwarf's movements, and he went out as noiseless as he had come.

As he reached the lower floor he was suddenly confronted by Mrs. Nolan.

"You were too late, Mr. Black," cried the old care-taker. "Hugo left the mansion half an hour ago."

"Ah! and he him, Nolan?"

"Yes. He seemed in a perfect rage. He stopped in the hall yonder and I thought I met the library door. As my mistress there?"

"Yes."

"I thought so. All at once Hugo dived his hand into the corridor and drew out something that glittered in the light. It was the great knife. While he did not speak, Mr. Black, I would see that the little monster was furious. I never saw such in such a perfect fellow."

Donald Black left the mansion and stood for some moments upon the lawn outside.

The night gave tokens of a storm. Great masses of clouds were following the sun in the west, the wind had already freshened, and, as the detective listened, a dull sound of thunder came from afar.

Suddenly out of the gathering gloom came a figure that stopped the man from London.

It was Masterson, the young game-keeper.

"I was looking for you," he exclaimed, as he encountered the detective. "Hugo is escaped."

"You've seen him, too?"

"Yes, the dwarf was in mischief bent. He darted past me a few minutes ago headed toward the bridge leading to Lady Judith's estate."

Black started visibly.

"Then Hugo is gone," he exclaimed. "Then, my trail leads the same way."

Masterson would have made a reply, had not the ferret continued:

"I must see Lady Valerie, I left her in the library a moment ago. Wait for me."

He hurried back into the house; he found Valerie where he had left her, but not alone, for Nolan was there, too.

"Nolan has told you?" said Donald Black. "Hugo has gone to the Grange."

"The Grange? Merciful heavens!"

"He will meet Lady Judith tonight. Such is his intention."

"And you intend to follow him?"

"At once."

"Pardon me, Mr. Black, if I say that I

seem to read your thoughts. You believe that the pearl button was associated with the black dagger the night of the fifth?"

"It may be true, mais."

"I fear as much, and if Hugo meets Lady Judith, both terrible in passion——"

"I am off! When I return you will know the solution of the murder mystery of Maison d'Ivoire. I feel it. It must be solved before day."

"And whatever happens may heaven protect you, my friend," and Donald Black bowed as he sprang away, leaving the two white-faced women silent and thoughtful in the library.

CHAPTER XXVII.

BETWEEN MIDNIGHT AND MORNING.

It was true, as Masterson informed the detective, that Hugo had gone toward the Grange on the other side of the river. That bundle of nerves and madness had left his room in Mascot Hall and was hastening afoot to the home of Wild Judith.

Mrs Nolan had witnessed his last outburst of wrath hurtling from the roof, and, still frothing at the mouth, Hugo was breasting the rising wind as he stumbled along, now and then nearly falling headlong in his eagerness to reach a certain place within a given time.

He paused on the bridge and for a few moments looked down to the faintly discernible waters, grinding his teeth with new rage, as if he recalled his late experience on the rocks not far away.

The gathering storm was nearly ready to break as the thunder told him, and ere he passed on a few pattering drops struck his heated face.

He did not stop until, thief like, he crept upon the vine-clad porch of the Grange and paused near the door. Then, as if hesitating on the very threshold of his goal, he leaned again one of the great columns and drew a long breath.

There was a light in the great room just ahead. He could see the sumptuous furnishings, the pictures on the walls, the brilliant effects of the light as it revealed every object. Then a footfall came hot and his hands shut madly.

No one was in the room.

All at once the carved door opened and some one entered.

A figure unlike that which emanates from the throat of a wild animal in ambush when the prey approaches, a figure leaped unbidden from the hunchback's lips, and he straightened as if he had sought his doom.

In another moment he was at the door.

His quick, impulsive knock caused the occupant of the chamber to hurry across the carpet.

She—it was Judith herself—seized the knob and threw the door eagerly.

"What, back at last!" she cried and the tone changed as she saw who it was as Hugo bounded into the light.

"You, dog of passion!" she exclaimed, falling back and with clenched hands staring at the dwarf as if he had come back from the dead.

"Why not?" grinned Hugo. "You weren't looking for me, my Lady Judith, but I'm unexpected; ha! ha!"

He hopped across the room and stopped beside one of her great plush arm-chairs, from which he eyed Judith, who had not yet recovered from her surprise.

"You thought I was some one else?" he went on.

"I thought—but never mind. You are here."

"You thought, too, the waters had me, eh?" grinned the monster.

"No, I feared that some one pulled you from the rocks, curse him!"

"Saved me to become your guest and lover again? That's clever. I'm glad to see you grieve."

"Don't!" cried Judith, almost breaking in upon the dwarf's speech. "What brings you to the Grange to-night?"

"Justice."

"That's a fine word for you to use," and the woman smiled. "It becomes you very well, I think."

"Come, don't be sarcastic. I'm not a hero who is liable to resent——"

Judith made no reply to this. She looked beyond Hugo to the door as if she hoped some other face would come.

The man from London is down there," continued the hunchback. "He did not find the trail in London."

"I care not what he found or did not find. What is all this to Judith of Trevora still?"

"More than you think, my lady. A good deal more than you dream in your fancied security."

"You want to threaten me again, do you? You think I am defenseless here."

"I had not thought anything about that. Where's your button, my lady?"

He spoke the words suddenly, and Lady Judith's face paled for an instant as she leaned toward the dwarf.

"What button?" she cried.

"Is it possible that you don't know—that you never missed it?"

"You speak in riddles."

"The button of jacket—the one with the martin fur border, though the martin was not used to supply the fur, eh? Where is it? There's a button missing from the garment that you supplied its place?"

Judith seemed overcome by the fear that turned another shade, but with great self-possession she quickly replied and shook her head.

"Missing, eh?" she said, and the face at the door instantly vanished.

In a minute as it were the maid came back and Judith took from her the garment she carried on her arm.

"That's the one, with the pearl button," cried Hugo, pointing at the jacket. "How came it so?"

With compressed lips Lady Judith count the button that had been torn from the

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

The words came from Judith's lips without effort.

She grew white, terrible white again. Hugo's words seemed to turn her once more into a beautiful demon.

Throwing the jacket across the room, she strode forward and stopped in front of the grinning dwarf.

"You, your vengeance—your triumph, you think!" she hissed. "I see it all. You turned the pearl button over to the detective from London!"

"I did not; but it fell into his hands just the same. I feel your clutch at my throat again. You threw me to the waters and the rocks. You went to the Hall the night of the fifth. Lord Mascot, under the spell of your eyes, showed you the jewels and then and there asked you to become his wife. It's all plain to Hugo. Perhaps he saw some of the drama under ground. The black dagger was handy; you even had it in your hand admiring its workmanship when he tried to kiss you and threw him off in a rage. They found him where you left him with the black dagger in his heart and the pearl button in his tongue below, my lady? Where is there a missing link in the chain? The pearl button, torn off in the struggle, completes the detective's trail. All, I repeat, is

THE FALLWORTH PLOT.

Fred Bentley's Strange Discovery---How a Villain Was Foiled---A Man's Queer Disappearance.

By FRANK HONEYWELL.

(Copyright, 1900.)

CHAPTER I.

A CALLER IN THE NIGHT.

Listen!

It was something more than the rattling of the decrepit, worm-eaten door by the late November wind this time. Some one outside was trying to force his way into the house, or else he was announcing his arrival in a very unusual way. Fred Bentley was the only one at home, and he had just sought his room in the attic for the night. He had slipped off one shoe and this he quickly drew on again and laced it in a twinkling. Then he went to the single attic window under the south gable and gently raised it.

The noise he made was very slight, but it did not escape the ear of the man below. The moon was shining bright, and Fred saw a heavy-bearded face turned upward.

"Hello," said Fred.

"Hello," was the reply, in a heavy voice. "Who are you?"

There was no reply to the question.

"What do you want?"

Is Mr. Guntier at home?

"No."

"Hm-m!"

Fred waited in silence for the man to say something. Presently the fellow spoke:

"When will he be home?" he asked.

Fred hesitated. His caution was aroused and he wanted a little time to think before he replied. If the man were indeed a house-breaker, perhaps the knowledge that the boy was alone and would be alone until morning might make him bolder. But Fred was eighteen years old, weighed a hundred and forty pounds, and was much stronger than the average man. He had been a farmer's boy all his life, at least as long as he could remember, and had had all the invigorating exercise which usually befalls one in his station. Moreover, he was practically fearless, and needed little urging from any source to defend himself and what was left to his charge. His reply came soon:

"Mr. Guntie will not be home until to-morrow evening. He and the rest of the family, except myself, have gone over to Pal-i-tink, ten miles away, to do some buying and to visit relatives. They probably won't start back until late to-morrow afternoon."

"Hm-m."

"What's he hm-ming about?" Fred wondered. Then he said:

"Were I to do in the place of Mr. Guntier?"

You?" said the fellow, seeming to start a little as if something of a different nature had come to his mind. "Who are you?"

My name is Fred Bent."

And you are——"

Nephew of Mr. Joseph Guntier, at your service."

Hm-m.

"There it goes again." mused Fred. "What in the world does he want at this time of night, way out here, two miles from the nearest station, and the next-quickest a mile from another farm house?"

"If you what you can do," said the fellow, at last, "you can come down and let me in and give me a night's lodging, or if you're hospitable enough for that, some business, if not, I'll have to tramp until I find accommodations."

Well, that is cool," said Fred to himself. "But this raw wind is just a little cooler, and I guess there's no need of letting the fellow freeze, so I'll——

All right," he called out as he shut the window.

He was down stairs in a jiffy and soon had the kitchen door open and the man entered. The stranger was a little taller and heavier than Fred and looked about the room with a keen, restless glance which made the young host suspicious. The kitchen fire was still burning and the visitor went at once to the stove and bent over it to warm himself.

"I'm cold," he said, half to himself as he looked at the little clock on the mantel. "hm-m."

How far have you traveled tonight?" asked Fred, wishing to let the fellow lapse into silence or soliloquy.

From Franklin," was the reply.

It's pretty cold," said Fred, "you must have been in a big hurry to see Mr. Guntier, or you would have waited until tomorrow."

I was," said the stranger. Then he added:

Why don't you call Mr. Guntier uncle? I haven't heard you refer to him as such yet."

Very inquisitive," thought Fred. How-ever, I'll take my turn in a moment."

"Its and I don't get along any too well. In fact. I never could quite agree to submit to his domineering ways, though he hasn't dared to touch me for the past two or three years. I don't think I'll stay here very long.

Hm-m.

Now, are here," said Fred. "I've told you a good deal for a stranger. It seems to me that it's about time for you to introduce yourself and tell me what you're because I had to——

You're here also," said the stranger.

Well, what of it?" said Fred, flushing.

And I'm a rifle bigger than you," the fellow continued.

Alone or not alone, bigger or smaller, you can't stay here tonight without telling me who you are.

I might tell you anything, whatever I pleased, and you could believe me or not, as you chose.

You are a very strange fellow," said Fred, a little disconcerted.

Of course I am," said the man. "That's what I want to be. It makes many men successful to be strange. Just let me sit right here, I like some grit and have no

[illegible] my name is Jeremiah [illegible] to you, by robbery. If you will give me a [illegible] you no more until morning.

Fred led the way to the spare bed room, which joined the sitting room, and lighting a lamp for the stranger, left him there by himself. Then he went back to the kitchen he mused some moments before deciding what he should do.

I can't leave him there by himself," the boy concluded, "so I'll just have to take Mr. Guntier's room with me to-night. My, wouldn't they be hoppin' if they knew of it! But they won't know, and, besides, I am doing it all for their good, so here goes."

So he went into Mr. and Mrs. Guntier's room, undressed, and crept between the blankets of the warm, comfy bed, and in spite of the small excitement of the evening he was soon fast asleep.

When he awoke the room was still dark, and for a moment he could not recall what that crept in at the window. Some peculiar, cautious instinct prompted him to keep his eyes only a little, but that little was enough to enable him to see the door of the room open slowly and the stranger enter, stocking-tipe. Fred did not jump to his feet and demand to know what he was up to with that. He wanted to find out what the man was up to, and he lay still with his eyelids lifted ever so slightly.

Thompson had a lighted lamp in his hand but the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

He succeeded in finding a hiding place similar to Thompson's about half a mile to the southward, and then hastened back home. His movements during the night's espionage had been rapid, and he was not nearly so chilled as one might suspect, although the air was cold and the ground stiff with frost.

The window by way of which he had left the house did not latch when closed, and he had little difficulty in making a noiseless re-entrance into the house. When he got inside he looked at his silver watch by aid of the moonlight and found that it was half-past two a. m. Then he undressed and crept back into bed, but the excitement of the night had had its effect on him and it was fully an hour before he closed his eyes again in slumber.

How little Fred Bentley guessed the vast importance of this night's adventure, and how little he suspected the bearing it was to have on his future life. But exciting events were destined to follow thick and fast until the mystery should be cleared up, and we will leave him to sleep a few hours longer before his mind is to be disturbed with far deeper anticipations of the future.

CHAPTER III.

MR. GUNTLER'S RETURN.

Fred awoke at half-past six o'clock next morning, a considerably later hour than usual for him, even at this time of the year, and when he saw the first beams of the sun struggling to find their way through a break in the eastern hills and into his—or rather Mr. and Mrs. Guntler's—window, he bounded out of bed and dressed himself in a hurry. Then he went to the kitchen and built a fire in the stove, and before very long the breakfast coffee was simmering and the steak and potatoes were broiling and frying away as if overseen by the eye of a professional cook.

This done, Fred went to Thompson's room and called him. The strange visitor said a "yes," which was soon followed by a characteristic "hem," and Fred guessed correctly that the man had got out of bed and found the room considerably colder than suited his ideas of comfort.

Thompson eyed Fred keenly when he appeared in the kitchen, but the boy pretended not to notice this fact. In the course of the meal Fred invited the man to wait about the house until the rest of the family should return in the evening. At first the

"Chloroform!"

man seemed about to agree to this arrangement, and young Bentley hoped that he would, for if the same burglar should leave the vicinity for the day, no doubt he would not look for the package he had hidden in the hollow oak and find it missing, but the man soon changed his mind, saying that the weather indications foretold a pleasant day and that he would go away on other business and return in the evening.

Fred had good enough control over himself not to show his disappointment, and when breakfast was on and Thompson had prepared to go, he returned the fellow's good-by in a seemingly cordial way and went about his morning work.

It was late when young Bentley had finished the labors of this morning but he felt justified in consequence of what had taken place during the night before. His mind was full of confused thoughts in regard to his adventure, and about all he could do was to get grain to feed and wonder how the affair would turn out.

"If that fellow has found that his stolen package has been removed, no doubt he is spying about the place now and will hang around here all day," mused the boy as he started to the field to spend a couple of hours husking corn before dinner.

The corn-field bordered on the east timber, and Fred's work lay near the edge of the woods. As he tore down shock after shock and worked away as if he really liked his labor—for he was a very fast cornhusker—he kept a careful lookout to see if he were being watched. This he did in a way which seemed to be that of only a casual, wide-awake observer, and was rewarded by seeing a form, which he would have sworn was Thompson's moving cautiously from tree to tree as if trying to get as close as possible to the boy in the field without being observed.

Fred was satisfied now and paid little more attention to the fellow during the rest of the day. At noon he went home, prepared and ate a good meal, and returned to the field, where he worked until four o'clock, when he returned to the stables and began his evening chores. He was an independent youth, as may have already been observed, and usually managed his work as he pleased, in spite of Mr. Guntler's domineering ways, and as the latter had to pay the boy no wages, he was no doubt pretty well satisfied with young Bentley's work, though he did a great deal of grumbling and grunting.

It was five o'clock and Fred had just begun milking, when he heard the carriage rattle creakingly into the yard and he knew that Mr. Guntler, his wife, son, and two daughters had returned.

"Fred!" it was Mr. Guntler calling.

"Hello!" called Fred.

"Come out here and take care of the team."

"He's getting bolder than usual," thought Fred. "He must have had a few glasses too much, but it won't hurt him. Besides, Jim can take care of the team just as well as I can."

"Are you coming?" came angrily.

"No, sir," replied Fred. "I'm busy—I'm right in the middle of a cow now. Turn the team over to Jim."

Of course Fred did not mean that he was "right in the middle of a cow," he merely meant that he had but half milked her, but the ridiculousness of his manner of statement revealed itself to him all of a sudden, and when the irate Guntler came half-staggering around the corner, whip in hand, he found the boy ready to burst with laughter.

This put Mr. Guntler in a furious rage. He raised his whip and was about to strike Fred with the butt of it, when the latter, with a warning, "Look out, there," sprang up and backward out of the man's way. The whip came down with a thud on the stable floor, and Fred saw the glaring eyes of Mr. Guntler pierce the dusk-darkness and burning like fox-fire.

For the first time, the boy became angry. The audacity of the act put him on mettle, and, without regard for possible consequences, he suddenly emptied the contents of his milk pail full in the face of the astonished man.

The act seemed to bring Guntler to his senses, for he quickly about-faced and left the stable, cursing a blue streak and declaring that Fred should pay for the act. The boy, being now left alone, went on with his milking as if nothing unusual had happened, though no doubt the affair made him think harder than ever.

"What next?" he mused.

About fifteen minutes after this matter occurred, the doorway was again darkened by the form of a man, and Fred looked up prepared for another outbreak, but this time was somewhat reassured by recognising in the face and build of the person none other than Mr. Thompson.

"Good evening," said Thompson.

"How do you do?" returned Fred.

"Hm—I see that your uncle has returned."

"Yes," said the boy. "I guess you'll find him in the house."

"Very well. I'll go there."

And the fellow left the stable.

Fred hurried his milking, for he felt that something interesting was likely to occur. By half-past six o'clock he had finished everything and then hastened into the house.

He found Mr. Thompson and the family seated at the supper table, and took his own place without speaking and without being noticed. Mr. Guntler had changed his clothes, and to all outward appearances no one would not have known that anything unusual had occurred, but there was a fierce set to the man's heavy under-shot jaw which boded no good for young Bentley.

Mr. Guntler was conversing with Thompson as if they had been friends since childhood, and Fred wondered how the farmer would take it if he knew what had occurred in the house during the night before. Thompson shot a number of sharp glances at Fred during the meal, but the latter preserved an appearance of quiet innocence which no doubt served the more to perplex the wily visitor.

After supper Fred took a magazine and seated himself in a corner of the room, for he could see that Mr. Guntler and Thompson wanted him out of the way.

"I won't please them," said Fred to himself, stubbornly, "and, besides, I want to read and have a right to do so during reasonable hours."

Jim got out a deck of cards and began a game of solitaire, and Mrs. Guntler scolded Lizzie until she succeeded in driving that redhead out of the supper dishes, and then herself took part in the conversation between her husband and Mr. Thompson.

Jim was a foxy, good-for-nothing fellow, a few months younger than Fred, He and Fred had never got along very well together, but the latter had managed to steer pretty clear of Jim and thus avoided much trouble with that fellow. Moreover, Jim was a natural born coward and was afraid of Fred at heart, though always ready to do no end of boasting when the boy he ever got into a racket with Fred."

At last, Mr. Guntler ordered all the "children off to bed," and Fred, who had been intending to retire at that hour so was his custom, soon laid his magazine aside and climbed the ladder into his attic room.

This room was not such a bad one, after all, in front of the fire that it was in the attic. It had received a rough coat of plaster, and through young Bentley's taste and ingenuity was decorated in no mean way. Besides, it was just over the kitchen where a fire was kept burning all the time during the winter, except in the middle of the night. It was Fred's labor always to build the fire on raw mornings, and here was a convenient and handy place from which to issue into the kitchen—so said Mrs. Guntler.

"Now," thought Fred, when he had reached his room, "I hope they stay right in the kitchen and carry on their conversation there, for I am very eager and anxious to overhear it. I am sure that it is something of the importance and who knows—"

At this moment he stopped and listened intently. Jim and Lou and Lizzie had gone to their rooms before Fred had retired, and only the three older people were left below. Thompson was now speaking in an undertone, and Fred wished very much to hear his first words.

He knelt down by the hole in the floor, which let him in and out of his room, and was rewarded by hearing the following fragmentary speech made by the visitor:

"—because I suspect him. We mustn't talk about the matter in this room with him up there."

"Suspect him?" said Guntler. "What makes you suspect him? He don't know anything."

"Don't you fool yourself," replied Thompson. "I didn't stay in the house with him last night for nothing."

"Why," said Mrs. Guntler asked.

"Oh, nothing positive," replied Thompson, "only the less said in this room with him up, the better."

"Jane," said Mr. Guntler to his wife; "you go and fix a little sittin' room."

Fred almost groaned aloud in his disappointment.

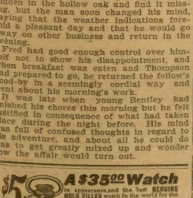
CHAPTER IV.

THE TWO KAYSTONEPPERS.

What was Fred Bentley to do? He must not miss overhearing the conversation that was to take place in the sitting room, for Mrs. Guntler with a sour look on her face, because of her husband's commanding tone, took up a fire shovel from behind the stove, banged open the stove door, and was soon heaping a fire in the sitting room with a shovelful of hot coals. The sitting room door was left open, so as to get the heat possible from the kitchen, and this heat, combined with the fire in the stove which was soon roaring in the sitting room stove, quickly made that room comfortable enough to occupy.

As soon as all three were in the sitting

"Chloroform!"



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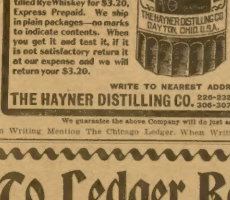

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room the door was closed; but by the time Fred had decided what he would do, or attempt to do. Slipping off his shoes, he climbed down the half-ladder, half-stairway into the kitchen, but there hesitated a few moments, wondering which of two plans he had better pursue. He might listen at the door between the kitchen and sitting room, or he might steal softly into the sitting room over the sitting room and hover about the head of the stairs in the front room, and meant for letting heat into the upper room. In either plan there was danger of discovery; the door between the kitchen and sitting room might, for some reason, be opened and the listener discovered; or he might be heard by Jim or the girls as he made his way upstairs.

Finally he decided to try the upstairs plan, and gently opening the sitting room door, was soon safe out of the kitchen. Here at the foot of the stairs he halted and listened. At first he heard nothing, but presently his heart beat very fast as he caught the sound of a step at the head of the stairs. The noise was very slight; but it was repeated in a moment and Fred was appalled with the conclusion that some one was descending the stairway.

"It must be Jim," muttered Fred, "and what's he up to? The same thing that I am, and I'll bet a good deal."

But what was he to do? Jim was slowly but surely descending the stairs, and would soon discover him. Luckily the region of the foot of the stairs was used as a sort of wardrobe, where the heavy winter-wear of the boys and Mr. Gunter was hung out. Fred suddenly determined to hide as well as he could behind these. In the slim hope that he might not be discovered. He was soon far better concealed than he had dared believe possible, and very shortly Jim was at the foot of the stairs with his ears glued against the door.

It was a tight box and Fred hugged the wall with all good earnestness. Jim listened for some moments in silence, and then began to grow impatient on hearing no evidence of a conversation going on in the kitchen. There was no key-hole for him to look through and as he stood there in doubt as to what he should do, he uttered several broken sentences, which sounded very natural like curses, though Fred's head was considerably muffled in an overcoat and he could not hear very well. At last, however, Jim ventured to open the door just a little, and finding that there was light in the room, opened it wider, and stepped into the kitchen.

Of course, Jim knew by this time where his parents and the stranger were provided to be found, and without much hesitation, he advanced over the kitchen floor to the sitting room entrance. He was now ready to say that his original intention, and he was not slow to take advantage of the door open.

He crept swiftly but softly up the stairs and was soon in the room over the secret council chamber. The door of Lou and Lizzie's room was closed, but Jim was sure that he had been neither seen nor heard by either of the girls. There was a board cover laid loosely over the hole in the floor, and after gently closing and locking the door, he removed the cover, and prostrating himself on the floor, applied his face to the opening.

From his position young Bentley could see a large part of the room, including the door behind which he supposed Jim to be playing his part of listener. For the first time Fred felt some compunction from his own actions, for he could not help comparing himself with Jim, whom he thoroughly despised. But the first words he heard from the people below drove all such thoughts for the time being quite out of his mind.

"Do you really think that infernal, impudent Fred suspects anything?"

It was Mr. Guntley who spoke.

"I'm infernal and impudent, am I?" mused Fred. "Well, that's a nice one. But what—"

His soliloquy was interrupted by the reply of Thompson:

"Suspect anything? Why, of course he does. I tell you he's a smart young cub and if he doesn't know everything, or enough to make him mighty troublesome to you and to me, then my name isn't Thompson. I could see that something was up before I had been with him half an hour, and I'd be told me right out that he wasn't going to stay here with you much longer."

"You don't say," exclaimed Mrs. Gunter. "Did he say why he was going to leave?"

"No" said the crafty Thompson; "but, of course, it was because he suspects something. You people have been too careless around here."

"Is it possible," said Mrs. Guntler, "that he has overheard any of our conversation, and knows what?"

"Knows what?" Oh, why did Thompson interrupt that sentence when the dear secret was about to be revealed.

"Stop! You must be more careful. You must not rehearse the history of the affair even between yourselves, nor in my presence."

Mrs. Guntler looked frightened.

"Why not?" she asked.

"The very walls have ears," replied Thompson. "Who knows but that he may be listening to our conversation this very moment!"

Both Mr. and Mrs. Gunther jumped from their seats.

"Oh, calm yourselves," said Thompson. "Of course that was only a warning. No doubt he is fast asleep in his rooms. There is no direct connection between the kitchen attic and this part of the house, is there?"

"No, oh, no," said Gunther as he and his wife resumed their seats. "I guess everything is safe."

During this exciting conversation Fred had been careful to keep his face away from the opening in the floor of the upper room, so that, if by chance any of those below should look upward half expecting to see him looking down upon them, he should not be discovered. Nevertheless, he heard everything plainly, and was worked up to a pitch of wonder.

"And now," said Thompson, when Gunther and his wife had become quieted down; "now to the business which I came to see you about. The fact is, my affairs at home are not going as well as I could wish, and—and, indeed, I can't afford to pay you four hundred for this year—at least, not until things pick up a little. I am compelled to reduce your allowance to two hundred dollars for the year, beginning last June."

"What!" came from both Mr. and Mrs. Gunther.

"It is true," said Thompson. "Indeed, it is all I can do to raise the two hundred now, for everything has gone wrong during the past year, or I shouldn't have put you off so long as I have. I know you are entitled to the money, and you shall have the rest of it next summer, together with the five thousand I promised you fifteen or twenty years ago, if the boy can be kept in the dark for five or six months I shall be perfectly safe."

"But how can he be kept in the dark if he suspects anything now?" asked Mrs. Guntler.

"You must simply change your manner toward him, treat him as you would treat your own son, or better, give him all the spending money you can, and so on. I'll make it all right with you when I come by my fortune."

"I don't know," objected Mrs. Guntler, clasping her hands very tight as if she were clutching a goodly number of gold coins.

"But you must," declared Thompson. "I must be sure of cash in the tenth of next March when he will be nineteen years of age. If he should suspect that I am the fortune by that time, according to his own father's will, he would step right in and—"

"And suppose," said Mrs. Guntler; "he should suspect the truth, get hold of the money—"

"Relief" cried Thompson, jumping to his feet in his alarm. "You don't mean to say that you have relics that would identify the boy?"

Guntler smiled uneasily.

"Maybe I have," he said, "but then that makes no difference—"

"Makes no difference? Well, I should say it does. Why, I'll be lost, for one, as he has them in his possession now."

"Relics, what?" cried Mrs. Guntler.

"Just what I say," replied Thompson. "I heard him rooting and poking around after something last night, no doubt it was the relics he was after; if you have given him a clue to where they are—"

"Good gracious!" cried Mrs. Guntler, springing again from her rocking chair. "What's going to happen next?" exclaimed Mr. Guntler, and Fred from his position overhead wondered the same.

"I must go and see if they are gone," said Mrs. Guntler, "or else, give me the key. You always insisted on keeping it yourself."

"Yes, I'll go with you," said Guntler.

At this moment, without much hesitation, he advanced over the kitchen floor to the sitting room entrance. He was now ready to say that his original intention, and he was not slow to take advantage of the door open him.

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"I must go and see if they are gone," said Mrs. Guntler. "Come

The Black Dagger.

(Continued from page eleven.)

solved to wait till the storm abated.

The end of the terrible storm seemed distant, for the wind united with the rain to render the night one of absolute terror; but at length on the fringe of another day the rain-god lessened his fury and at last finally ceased.

Donald Black and Masterson took up the trial at once. They turned their faces toward Judith's home, but on the bridge they paused again and Masterson uttered a cry as he picked up something from the wet planks.

"Look!" he exclaimed. "The black dagger!"

Sure enough the young game-keeper was holding the deadly blade in his hand and the detective took it from him.

"She dropped it in her flight," he said.

"But what is that fastened to the bending tree down yonder? The waters lift and lower it as though it were a human body. Come! It is some victim of the river."

"Lady Judith, for my head!"

The two men made their way down the slippery banks to the object just seen. Masterson pulled it ashore and both looked at his grewsome burden.

Lady Judith, "Wild Judith," had reached the end of passion's tether; she lay drenched and dead in Masterson's strong arms, and over the heart, as the men soon discovered, was a dagger wound that told the whole story. Doubtless she poured on the bridge and sent the fated dagger to her heart to tear it forth and let it fall from her hands are she river received her.

Donald Black and Max bore the body to the halls of the Grange and the woe-stricken servants took it. Hugo was no longer there to grin over the woman he had loved.

The mystery was solved at last. Lady Judith, perhaps in a moment of passion, had killed old Lord Mascot, who was showing her the Rehob's treasures, and Thimbles and Larry, Sir Reginald's tools, must have found the body there when they came to commit the theft.

Soon after the last tragedy of Mascot Hall Hugo left the estate, and afterward perished in a dark den of crime in East London; Sir Reginald kept his promise to Donald Black, and Thimbles came to the usual end of London thieves.

The Grange fell to one who had never seen Lady Judith, one who dropped no flower on the grave of the mad woman; and the black dagger was put away forever with no one to read its fateful inscription.

Of course Valerie rewarded Donald Black for his work in the case and one day, "when all the woods were green," the beautiful heiress of Mascot had old Nolan array her in the wedding gown, and the kiss at the altar was the beginning of the full fruition of love.

Masterson, happy in the love of the woman who was the sunshine of his life, not knowing at last the secret of his birth, thanks to another hand by Donald Black, a birth of which he was proud, inhabits Mascot Hall, and vows that Lady Valerie and "the little ones" are well worth living for.

(The end.)

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Skirt 22, 24, 26, 28, 30 inch waist.

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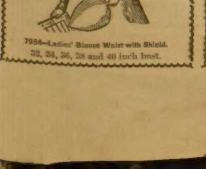

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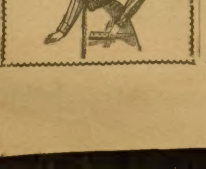

A Strange Patagonian Animal

Doctor Rudolph Hauthal, who visited the cave in Patagonia where Doctor Nordenskjold found the skin of the mysterious animal called megatherium by Doctor Ameghino, its discoverer, has published an article on it in the Revista Museo de la Plata. Doctor Hauthal himself discovered other pieces of skin and bones of the animal in the Nordenskjold cavern. Associated with them he found bones of man, the dog, cat, horse and other animals, as well as bone and stone implements. The cave is near Consuelo Grove, Last Hope Inlet, west of the coast of southern Patagonia, and there are others near still unexplored. Doctor Hulg believes that the skin of the sloth, Grypotherium of Rheinhardt, whose fossils are found in the beds of the pampas further north. Doctor Hauthal thinks that the cave was once inhabited by man and domesticated animals, including sloths, during an interglacial period.

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"Nope."

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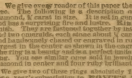

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The above is the title of an illustrated booklet, describing the Illinois Central's line between Chicago and Council Bluffs and Omaha. Mail applications for this booklet will be received at once, and all such will be filled immediately. Address A. H. Hanson, G. P. A. Illinois Central R. R., Chicago, Illinois.

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FOR YOUTHFUL EYES.

Danger From Wild Beasts.

Lions, tigers, and leopards, are not necessarily eager to tear human beings to pieces. All the carnivora show a certain ferocity in hunting their prey, but one should remember that they hunt to live, and not only as an amusement. Undoubtedly, they enjoy the exercise of their powers, as every animal—including man—usually does. But their rule is to live in peace and harmony with one another, even when they are not of the same species.

At the time when they are building or choosing their homes and rearing their young, they will quarrel over the best places for that purpose. That, however, is not a selfish quarrel; it means that they wish to give the best to their families instead of to their friends. When the breeding season is over, the fox and the badger will share the same hole in perfect good fellowship all through the winter months, because, their young being then able to care for themselves, the cause of the quarrel is past and gone.

We must remember, too, that man is not the natural food of any animal. According to Mr. Cornish, "If the item 'man' were subtracted from the bill-of-fare of all the carnivora, they would never want a meal." In jungle haunts, however, it is said that more "human being are killed by tigers than by any other wild beast, except by starving wolves," and yet this is what Sir Samuel Baker has noticed in the tiger:

"There is a great difference in the habits of tigers. Some exist upon the game in the jungles; others prey especially upon the flocks belonging to the villagers. A few are designated 'man-eaters.' These are sometimes naturally ferocious, and, having attacked a human being, may have devoured the body, and thus acquired a taste for human flesh; or they may have been wounded on more than one occasion, and have learned to regard man as a natural enemy. But more frequently the 'man-eater' is a very old tiger, or more probably, tigress, that, having hunted in the neighborhood of villages and carried off some unfortunate woman, has discovered that it is far easier to kill a native than to hunt for jungle game."

The ordinary tiger is anxious to avoid men, and that is why tigers are more dangerous to hunt in high grass than in forests. In high grass they cannot see a man, or be seen by him, until he is close at hand; then who can blame the tiger for putting forth all his brute strength to get the better of an enemy? It takes two to make a quarrel, but it needs one to start it; and the beast is rarely the first to attack a man.—Our Animal Friends.

Magic of Figures.

You never can tell what figures will do. Of course they are truthful if properly handled, but some of them are capable of the most bewildering antics. Here is a method by which figures may be made to tell secrets in a way that will astonish those who are not informed about how to do the "figuring."

Ask some persons to put down unknown to you a number composed of three figures (say 762.) Tell him to transpose the figures (making 267) and to subtract the lesser from the greater. Then ask him to tell you the first figure of the result, and you can tell him the entire number. For instance, your first number in the present example is 762, which transposed makes 267. Subtract 267 from 762 and you have 495. The only figure that you are told is 4, the first of the result. All you have to do is to subtract 4 from 9, which will give you 5, the last figure, and the central figure is always 9. So your number will be 495. This is true in all cases where only three figures are used in making up a number. The central figure will always be 9 when the transposed number is subtracted from the original number, and the two end figures when added together will make 9. So, knowing either the first or last figure of the result you can give the entire number.

Will Not Rust Metal.

A curious phenomenon is that metal never rusts in the waters of Lake Titicaca. You can throw in a chain or an anchor, or any article of ordinary iron, and let it lie for weeks, and when you haul it up it will be as clean and bright as when it came from the foundry. And, what is stranger still, rust that has been formed upon metallic objects elsewhere will peel off when immersed in its waters. This is frequently noticed by railway and steamboat men. Rusty car wheels and rails, and even machinery, can be brightened by soaking them in the waters of Lake Titicaca.

They Eat Locusts.

The locust, which is very abundant in southern Europe and the Barbary states, is eaten by the inhabitants, and is said to be very good by travelers who have tasted them. The Goliath beetles of Africa are eaten by the natives, and are also said to be very good.

PRECEPT AND PRACTICE.

Rev. Mr. Jones—Good doggy—he's a nice doggy—
Tommy—Gee! An' he tole me in Sunday-school to never tell a lie!

Age and Youth.

Youth looks forward, Age looks back,
Up and down the selfsame track.
One with Hope goes, hand in hand,
Through a pleasant, sunlit land;
One with memory, side by side,
Walks where silent shadows glide.
Which is best—all, who can tell!—
Matin son or evening bell!

Youth must tread a weary way;
Age is near the close of day,
Many comrades, false and true,
Throng their way the journey through.
Little matter, Age or Youth,
So they fare with Love and Truth;
Evening song or matin bell—
With the faithful all is well.

How Lucky You Are!

The Tartarian alphabet contains 202 letters, being the longest in the world.

The Largest Insect.

The "elephant beetle" of Venezuela is the largest insect in the world. A full-grown one weighs half a pound.

Meeks—My wife never pays any attention to what I say.

Weeks—Mine does—at times.

Meeks—How do you manage it?

Weeks—I talk in my sleep.

NO MORE DRUGS.

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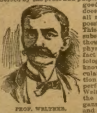

PROF. WELTMER.

Weltmerism, the Method of Magnetic Healing originated by Prof. S. A. Weltmer, of Nevada, Mo., and indorsed by the press and pulpit, in its wide scope of doing good for suffering humanity, does not only cure diseases of all nature but makes it impossible for disease to exist. This is a fact that has been substantiated by the many thousands of cures made. All physicians, all scientists, in fact all who know the physiology of the human race, know that if the organs of circulation, secretion and excretion are in perfect condition, perfect health is attained. Weltmerism, restores without the aid of medicine, these organs to their natural function and the disease is banished. This great method cures dyspepsia, indigestion, stomach trouble, in fact, any disease known to man or woman, and this without the aid of medicine that so often ruins a constitution, which under the Weltmer method of magnetic healing is made strong. T. T. Rhodes, Paris, Mo., Prosecuting Attorney of Monroe County, suffered for years from Sciatic Rheumatism, tried everything without benefit; was instantly cured through Prof. Weltmer's Absent Treatment. Mrs. C. E. Graham, Boise City, Iowa, afflicted with rheumatism nine years, cured through Weltmerism. Mrs. D. H. Allen, Aurora Springs, Mo., suffered from consumption in its worst form; fully restored by Prof. Weltmer's Absent Treatment. Send for a copy of the Magnetic Journal, a 40-page illustrated magazine, giving a long list of the most astounding cures ever performed. It is sent free.

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